

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday 20 September 2004

The **DEPUTY SPEAKER (Hon. R.B. Such)** took the chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

HOSPITALS, NOARLUNGA

A petition signed by 384 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to provide intensive care facilities at Noarlunga Hospital, was presented by Mr Brokenshire.

Petition received.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Upper South-East Dryland Salinity and Flood Management Act 2002—Quarterly Reports
19 December 2002—31 March 2003
1 April 2003—30 June 2003
1 January 2004—31 March 2004.

MID NORTH REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Minister for Regional Development): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.
Leave granted.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: On Thursday 16 September 2004, my office was advised by the Executive Director of the Office of Regional Affairs that, for some time, it has had concerns about the effectiveness of the Mid North Regional Development Board, particularly in relation to corporate governance and financial control issues. Earlier this year, a new Chief Executive Officer was appointed to the Mid North Regional Development Board. After his appointment, the CEO raised concerns with the Office of Regional Affairs about what he saw as a lack of proper board policies and procedures, and corporate governance. I am advised that subsequently the Mid North Regional Development Board requested assistance in addressing the issues and the Office of Regional Affairs agreed to provide \$5 000 by way of assistance towards a new governance review. The review was undertaken by Mr Chris Howis during July/August 2004. Mr Howis is a former chief executive of Balfour-Wauchope and a current director of the Adelaide Hills Regional Development Board.

I am advised that the Executive Director of the Office of Regional Affairs formally received a copy of the Howis report on Thursday 9 September 2004, and around the same time also received a copy of the Mid North Regional Development Board's audited financial reports for 2003-2004. The auditor's report contains a number of significant qualifications, which tend to confirm the observations of the Howis report, which highlights a board with an overall lack of understanding related to corporate governance, particularly in the finance area. The Executive Director of the Office of Regional Affairs advises that he has spoken to the chairman of the Mid North Regional Development Board on several occasions about the Howis report and, on Friday 17 September, wrote to him outlining the actions that the Office of Regional Affairs expects the board to undertake. I understand the board will be meeting tomorrow night to

address the Howis report and the issues outlined in the Executive Director's letter.

A copy of the Executive Director's letter will be forwarded to the Auditor-General today. The Executive Director will this week brief the CEOs of the local councils who, with the South Australian government, jointly fund the Mid North Regional Development Board. In addition, I will write this week to the Auditor-General, asking that actions of the board be reviewed and that recommendations be made to me on the board's past actions and future operations.

QUESTION TIME

CHILD ABUSE

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Youth now tell the house what action she took as a result of her meeting with child abuse advocates on 9 December last year? The opposition this morning notified the minister's office of the date of this meeting to ensure that the minister could address the issue.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): There seems to be some scoffing on the other side. It is completely appropriate that I answer questions about what steps have been taken subsequent to a meeting that occurred in December, because many steps have been taken by this government. Some information did arrive this morning from the leader's office—very scant information—but we have taken that information and we will be—

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Bright will be warned in a minute. The chair will not tolerate that sort of behaviour.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We are grateful for the shreds of information that have been provided, and we will look into that and bring back a considered response for the house. But in terms of the information that we have been able to glean thus far, it has been established that it was a meeting with the—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sir, they were pretty desperate last week to have an answer to their question, but this week they are less interested. We have established that it was a meeting with the Advocates for the Survivors—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Do you want to listen to loonies and ask questions on their behalf?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Treasurer is out of order!

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: So people who have been sexually abused are loonies, are they?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bright. I cautioned him before, and I warn him now. He is warned.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I rise on a point of order. I am simply responding to the Premier's assertion that people who have been sexually abused are lunatics. That is what he said.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I rise on a point of order, sir. I did not even make a comment. I ask the member to withdraw what he just said.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: That is what he said.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: He said 'the Premier'. Would the member please stand up and withdraw that comment.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: The Deputy Premier.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: A point of order, sir. I believe the member has misled this house.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just before I take the point of order—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cautioned the member for Bright; he then went on to ignore the chair and I warned him. He has been warned.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: A point of order, sir. The honourable member made an accusation against me that I had made a statement which I did not say at all, and I ask him to withdraw it and apologise.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: Mr Speaker, there was clearly a lot of noise in the chamber. It was the Deputy Premier to whom I was responding across the chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The chair did not hear the remark. It was out of order whether you said it or the deputy premier or whoever.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will take a point of order, sir. I did not say what the member just said I said.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can we get on with the business of the house.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We have been able to establish that it was a meeting with the Advocates for the Survivors of Child Abuse—that was the organisation that was meeting with the former minister on 9 December last year—that some very broad and general allegations were made about child abuse; and that we requested more details of evidence and details that may substantiate these very broad and general allegations. Our records show that no further information was supplied. Indeed, I met with representatives of that same organisation. First, I arranged to meet with the organisation but it was cancelled on a number of occasions, and then I met with the organisation. The allegations were not repeated to me and, indeed, we had a very positive meeting with the Advocates for the Survivors of Child Abuse.

This government has established a range of processes to deal with allegations of this sort: the paedophile task force; you can go there with the allegations.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The special investigations unit; you can go there with your allegations.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson is warned.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The Mullighan inquiry; you can go there with your allegations. But you need to have more than a shred—

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Bright will be named in a minute.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: You need to have more than just a general smearing of people: you actually have to come up with something to be tested in these various bodies that will look at accountability for these important crimes. These are things that cannot simply be bandied about. Can we get to the nub of this?

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Attorney is out of order! The leader is out of order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There are people in this parliament who would like the whispering campaign to go on, but they do not have the guts to stand up and put their name next to the people they are making allegations against.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson has been warned. He will be named and he will be out of here quickly if he is not careful.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I have a supplementary question—it is really for the Minister for Youth, but as she is not taking them: will the minister confirm that names were given at this particular meeting, that documentation was left with the minister, which the minister, after some time, returned to the people?

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Treasurer is out of order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not going to name in this house, I am not going to besmirch the reputation of people in this house. Those opposite—

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Point of order, sir.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no need to shout. I make the point that if people know the answer there is no need to ask the question. But the Leader has a point of order.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Sir, the minister is making an accusation. I did not ask for names because it is only fair they be investigated properly. I asked if names were given.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am not going to participate in this game. If they want to come into this house and besmirch the good name of people in this—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Point of order. The minister is totally misrepresenting me.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Before the point of order we will have a point of quietness in the house. Members are in here to serve the public, not to try and score points, on a very important social issue. One would think that people would want to listen and hear the question and the answer. The chair certainly does. The leader, do you have a point of order?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Just to say that once again the minister is misrepresenting me. I did not ask him to name anyone.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, do you wish to respond to that point?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: What I said in the answer to the first question I answered today is that we received some information just this morning from the Leader of the Opposition's office, and we have carried out some initial investigations, and I said that we would bring back an answer to the house, and we will.

DNA TESTING

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): My question is to the Premier. Given that the Democrats disagreed with the government's broadening of the state's DNA testing regime, what outcomes have emerged from the expanded testing in South Australia?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): It is true that the Democrats did criticise the move, and I think I have a quote here that says, 'A gung-ho step that's been exaggerated in its promotion'. That was said on 5AA with Leon Byner on Wednesday 10 July 2004. But I can tell the house that if gung-ho means enthusiastic leadership then this is one gung-ho step that we are very proud of. Recently collated figures show that results are flowing with 114 people arrested with the help of DNA evidence. They are facing a total of 312 charges that relate to 159 separate incidents including six rapes, three assaults, three drug offences, 12 robberies, seven incidents of aggravated serious criminal trespass, 116 non-aggravated serious criminal trespass, and 100 thefts. The government is delivering on its commitment to be tough on law and order and now our expansion of DNA testing has created one of South Australia's greatest crime fighting advancements since fingerprinting.

The testing of all prisoners and suspects of some serious indictable offences as well as some summary offences was introduced in April last year. At the time the DNA database contained records of about 500 convicted offenders that had taken around four years to collect. Now, 13 000 DNA profiles from suspects and offenders have been added to the database in less than 18 months of the expanded legislation's operation. Another 4 700 DNA samples found at crime scenes have also been added to the database. This database has now linked just over 1 000 different individuals to DNA samples found at crime scenes. The government recognises the amount of work this takes and this is why last year we committed an additional \$5.7 million towards the implementation of expanded DNA testing over four years, providing 12 new staff and equipment within the Forensic Science Centre where DNA samples are processed and matched.

This year Labor committed another \$3.1 million to assist the centre's investigation of serious crime and help manage an increasing pathology workload. We are bolstering South Australia's crime fighting effort with this great tool of the new millennium, as well as recruiting 200 more police. The new DNA testing regime is catching criminals. Almost half of the 1 400 people charged are current or former prisoners, reinforcing the theory that the majority of crime is committed by the minority of people. That minority is now in our sights and on our database. For those who want to be controversial and claim that DNA testing is an affront to civil liberties, they should realise that only the guilty have anything to fear from DNA testing.

CHILDREN IN STATE CARE

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is again to the Minister for Youth. Will the minister give an assurance that no person who was named as a subject of serious allegations made to her on 9 December will continue to work with children in state care without appropriate investigation of those allegations?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I can assist the honourable member with his question. The information we have is that no allegations of that sort were raised on that occasion.

PLASTIC BAGS

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): My question is to the Minister for the Environment and Conservation. What progress has been made in the campaign to remove plastic

bags from our community, and when will this environmental scourge be phased out?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I thank the member for Reynell for this important question, and I acknowledge her great interest in this program. As you would know, sir, the government has been an enthusiastic supporter of the campaign to get rid of single-use plastic bags, and we have been working with the other states and the commonwealth on developing a program to do this over the next few years. We already use about 6 billion to 7 billion plastic bags in Australia each year, and many of those bags end up in landfill. However, many end up in our natural environment, where they have an impact on the native fish, birds and other small animals.

It is estimated by Planet Ark that Australian shoppers pay about \$170 million each year for the privilege of using these single-use plastic bags. So, they do not come free of charge; there is actually a cost associated with it. Our latest initiative to reduce plastic bag use in South Australia is under the state government's Plastic Bag Challenge. Recently, at the Adelaide Central Market, I participated in an event where the Central Market promulgated the use of reusable bags in the market. I want to congratulate Central Market butcher Tony O'Connell, who came up with the idea for the Central Market to become plastic bag free over time. Zero Waste SA has been able to support that initiative to enable the Central Market and the city council to buy 12 000 reusable bags to encourage the use of alternatives by shoppers in the market.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The member for Unley, I know, is fascinated by all things within my portfolio. I am really sorry for him. He is no longer responsible for any of those things, suffering as he is on the back bench. The fund aims to encourage schools, communities, councils and businesses to come up with ideas to reduce plastic bags. We know that the effort to reduce plastic bag use is working particularly well in South Australia, where the latest estimates suggest that we are on target to reduce plastic bag use by 25 per cent by the end of this year. However, we cannot stop at 25 per cent; we have to go the whole hog. I was very pleased today to participate in a media conference with Kelvin Thomson, the shadow minister for environment at the federal level. He made the policy announcement that federal Labor will legislate to ban free single-use plastic bags in 2007 and set a new target for phasing them out by the end of 2006. I would like to see his opposite number, the new federal Minister for the Environment, agree and support this plan in a bipartisan way. We all know that plastic bags are a scourge, and I think it is the commitment of all members and, in fact, all South Australians to get rid of them from our state.

FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): My question is to the Minister for Families and Communities. In relation to the death of a baby at Victor Harbor, will the minister advise the house whether any officer of Family and Youth Services visited the baby's home after receiving notification from an Every Chance for Every Child Visitor that the baby was at risk?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I thought we had traversed that on the last occasion. What we said in the written answers that have been given to the house is that all appropriate steps were taken in relation to the investigation of these notifications.

We also know that there was an involvement of the relevant help bodies providing services to this family. I also said that a Child Death and Serious Injury Review Panel has been established, and that will consider the relationship that existed between the various government agencies involved at the time of the death of this child. I do not know how much further we can take this matter. We also have—

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. In answering questions, ministers are clearly supposed to address the substance of the question. This question simply requires a yes or no answer. That is the substance of the question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister has some latitude in how he or she answers the question. Minister, do you wish to add to your answer?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, I do not, sir.

Mrs REDMOND: I have a supplementary question. Will the minister advise whether ‘all appropriate steps’ included a visit from a FAYS officer?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: As I said before, a range of government agencies was involved in dealing with this family, and I said to the house that the—

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Heysen!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:—analysis that we have undertaken shows that they took appropriate steps. I have said before, sir, that there are always some cheap points to be made by those opposite following the death of children in circumstances where there has been involvement of government agencies. I also draw the attention of the house to the public policy reflected in the act about not disclosing details that tend to identify the family, and that included personal information about the family. That is a longstanding arrangement. I have also spoken to the house before—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bragg!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:—about the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Panel—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bragg!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:—which is available to review all these things, rather than this august arena during question time poring over the death of a child. It will do so in a considered, sensible and, I would think, much more intelligent way than is likely to emerge in question time in a parliament of this sort, especially given the propensity of those opposite to play politics with these serious issues.

Mr BROKESHIRE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Based on the Speaker’s ruling regarding ministers referring to documents and material when answering a question, I noted the minister referring to a piece of material on his desk as he started to answer that question. I ask that you rule that that piece of material be tabled.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I did not hear the minister say that he was referring to a specific document. The member for Florey.

DA VINCI ROBOTIC SURGICAL SYSTEM

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is to the Minister for Health. What procedures will be performed using the new state-of-the-art da Vinci robotic surgical system at the Royal

Adelaide Hospital, and how will this benefit South Australians?

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Infrastructure!

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I thank the honourable member for the question, because it gives me the opportunity to place on the public record the government’s appreciation for the generosity of the Pickard Foundation in the donation of a \$3 million da Vinci robotic surgical system. The Pickard Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation established by prominent building and development identity Mr Gordon Pickard, and the foundation is supported by the generosity of South Australian business leaders. The da Vinci robotic surgical system uses robot technology to minimise the invasiveness of a range of surgical procedures, including heart and prostate surgery.

With the da Vinci system, instead of having to make large surgical incisions, three pencil-sized ports are made for the cameras and instruments, and a surgeon operates by viewing a 3D image on a monitor while robotic ‘hands’ are mimicking the actual movement of the surgeon’s hands. For patients this means reduced post-operative pain, less scarring and a lowering of the potential for infection and blood loss. For our medical work force it offers the opportunity to keep pace with leading-edge technological innovation and change. The Pickard Foundation’s generosity in purchasing the da Vinci system will be backed up by the state government, which will provide the recurrent funding for its ongoing operation. Surgeons and nursing staff at the hospital have been trained to use the equipment and the first operation is expected to take place in November this year. A donation of \$3 million is significant. This equipment puts South Australia at the forefront of this type of technology and I again thank the Pickard Foundation for its generosity.

URANIUM MINING

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Premier inform the house whether the state government’s policy on new mines in South Australia, specifically relating to new mines where production includes uranium, has changed to one in support of mines where uranium is mined? This morning the Premier spoke of hopes of finding a new Roxby Downs in South Australia. The current state Labor election platform document states:

Labor continues to be opposed to the establishment of any new uranium mines.

The mining industry in South Australia has constantly raised concerns about Labor’s ‘no new mines’ uranium policy.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): It is like back to the future or forward to the past. There is no change whatsoever in our policy. I am talking about mines the size of Roxby Downs, although I have to say—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: No, if members opposite want to quote accurately, I have to say that we are working enthusiastically with Western Mining with the hope, ambition and expectation of doubling the size of Olympic Dam. That is our policy and that is what we want to achieve. But I am very pleased that the honourable member asked the question.

The conference has attracted about 200 delegates, including many from interstate and overseas. I was pleased to be able to tell them that the South Australian government is fervently pro growth, pro jobs and pro mining. Underlining that pro-mining stance, I announced—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Do you want to listen?

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, the member for Davenport!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Underlining the pro-mining stance, I announced two major initiatives to further support the expansion of the contribution of mining and petroleum to the South Australian economy. The State Strategic Plan sets mining targets—

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order, sir. The question is very specific as to whether or not this Labor government would allow a new uranium mine. That is what the question is about. The Premier is simply debating the issue.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has made the point. This house is not noted for specific answers.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I can announce today there is no change to the policy that has applied since 1982. That sounds like news, I know. Let us go on to what actually happened. The State Strategic Plan sets mining targets of a tripling of the annual value of exploration spending to \$100 million by 2007, an increase in minerals production to \$3 billion within 16 years and a further \$1 billion of minerals processing by 2020. By any measure these are extremely ambitious goals. Just last April I announced a plan for accelerating exploration, which was funded in the May budget at \$15 million over five years. I did this because South Australia is on the verge of an unprecedented minerals and petroleum boom.

At the same time, South Australia is a seriously under-explored state. We have only just scratched the surface of our minerals and petroleum potential. A recent international survey by the Fraser Institute—you know where that is, the Fraser Institute—which is in Canada, found that this state ranked No. 1 for the provision of geoscientific data for exploration. We also came third in the world in regard to government policy being supportive of exploration and mining. Let me repeat that: we came third in the world in regard to government policy supportive of exploration and mining. But the same survey also revealed that, in the minds of investors and technical experts in the mining industry—

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: They don't like the answer.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I love the answer; that is, the Strategic Plan should say no new uranium mines. My point of order is that the Premier has answered the question. He is now trying to divert attention from the embarrassing answer he has given.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I think the Premier has concluded his answer.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I have a supplementary question. Is the Premier aware that a large percentage of the mining exploration in South Australia is on land that contains uranium?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Well, you know, one of the things that we are keen to do—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Let me just say that we have today appointed a group of senior mining people to advise us, and one of those people is Hugh Morgan, who is the former chairman and CEO of Western Mining, the owners and operators of Olympic Dam. We are working hard with Western Mining to achieve the doubling of the Olympic mine

site and we hope to make a significant announcement about that in the future. I am sure that on that day we will see the Leader of the Opposition come out and applaud us for our work with Western Mining.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I have another supplementary question, just to help everyone understand the issue. How much extra uranium will be produced with the expansion of the Roxby Downs mine?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I hope that there is a lot produced because we intend to export it. We have been supportive of Western Mining since 1982 and only you apparently have failed to notice it.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: One more supplementary, sir.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Supplementaries are to be the exception, not the rule.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: It is only if he is going to write a second book, sir.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Oh, yes—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Mawson!

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The ice is getting very thin under the member for Mawson!

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Bright is on thin ice as well.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: If I can finish my answer, sir—the one big difference between this side of the house—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN:—and the other side of the house on nuclear policy is that they support a nuclear waste dump for South Australia; we don't.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The leader and the Premier are taking away from the dignity of question time by trying to stretch the rules in here, and the chair will not tolerate that. The member for Colton.

SCHOOLS, PUBLIC MEETINGS

Mr CAICA (Colton): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. What is the purpose of the series of public meetings regarding schools and pre-schools currently being held across South Australia?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank the member for Colton for his question because I know that he is interested in the outcomes in the development of public education in our state, unlike many people opposite. The Chief Executive of the Department of Education and Children's Services and I have been listening to the views of community members around this state because we want their input into how we can make our excellent public education system even better in the future as we come to plan for the next five to 10 years. We are holding 17 public meetings, one in each of the education regions throughout this state throughout this year. The first one was held in Murray Bridge at the beginning of August, and later in the year we will be visiting the member for Colton's electorate at Henley High School, which is part of the South-West District. These meetings and subsequent

meetings have been most positive in generating healthy discussion and debate about the priorities that parents, students, staff and other members of the community hold for our future education system.

I am pleased to say that many members of parliament, together with community and local government leaders, have come to these forums to discuss how they perceive our education system could be improved. The feedback from these people has been really extraordinary.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, the member for West Torrens!

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members know there is a big celebration on tonight; I would hate anyone to miss it.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I know that members opposite find it difficult to imagine that we want to invest in public schools, because they are only about depriving and cutting them. I am particularly pleased that community members from the Riverland to Mount Gambier, Parafield Gardens to Port Pirie and the Yorke Peninsula to the Eyre Peninsula have been able to have a part in our planning for the future. Here we recognise the important role the public education system plays in developing the skills, values and knowledge that young people will need into the future.

We invest \$1.72 billion a year in our public education system and, indeed, we have made public education a major priority of our government's time in office. Given its importance, it is important that we listen to what the public thinks about education, and the ideas and concerns they bring forward range from how we might better deliver services in the future to the initiatives which we have already made and which are greatly applauded out in the community, that is, reducing class sizes, our focus on literacy and numeracy and our work on the transition from schooling to further training and employment. It is particularly important, and our government does believe that it is important, and I acknowledge members opposite who have attended these forums—unlike the member for Bragg, who has taken no part in this policy development program. Nothing to brag about! I would have to say that Labor does listen, Labor does want to engage the community and, certainly, Labor knows that we need to invest in public education.

URANIUM MINING

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr Koutsantonis: Here he is; fiercely independent—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens is out of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: He is out of his tree, too, sir. Will the Minister for Environment and Conservation give an assurance to the house that he and his department would help facilitate any new Roxby Downs type of mining development in South Australia that involves uranium production?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): This is what CNN and Fox News call 'breaking news'. The breaking news is that we are helping Western Mining in order to try to double the size of the Olympic Dam mine—which is a mixed uranium, copper, rare earths and gold and other things mine—and also that our policy of 1982 still stands. The breaking news: the policy still stands after nearly 20-odd years.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Torrens.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): My question is to the Minister for Transport.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Torrens.

Members interjecting:

ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): No, I think it is called ladies first.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the member for Torrens that the whip is always correct. The member for Torrens.

Mrs GERAGHTY: That is right. Thank you, sir. My question is to the Minister for Disability. What level of support is the state government providing for people with acquired brain injury?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Disability): I thank the honourable member for her important question and acknowledge her powerful advocacy on behalf of disabled people, in particular, in relation to the facility at Strathmont, which is contained within her electorate, but also the new facility at Cresdee Road that the member for Torrens and I had the pleasure of inspecting this year. The complex belongs to Community Living for the Disabled, a not for profit organisation, and has been established for 20 years. It provides in home accommodation to support people who have suffered cerebral palsy or acquired brain injury, for instance, through a stroke or a road accident. This is an excellent example of a community-based living option. This project was undertaken in response to a growing need in the community for accommodation support.

The state government is very pleased to announce in its most recent budget that it has provided recurrent funding of \$460 000 per annum. This purpose built accommodation project at Windsor Gardens has two houses (each for four residents), three independent units and one overnight support worker. It is wheelchair accessible, has individual bedrooms for the residents (each with direct access to a bathroom), large internal and external entertainment areas, garden settings and 24 hour in-house support. I am also very pleased to announce that an extra \$280 000 in recurrent funding to provide individual support packages for another 35 people with brain injury was provided for in the last budget.

It is a high priority for the state government to assist people with disabilities to live and take part in the community. Only yesterday the member for Heysen and I attended a very important event—a set of awards for Brain Injury Week, which was running. The awards marked achievements by people who had sustained brain injuries and, while the achievements were modest, they were dramatic achievements for these people in terms of their lives. They set goals themselves that were about making small incremental changes, but it was very moving to see the journeys that these people had taken in recovering from their injuries, acknowledging those injuries, engaging in rehabilitation and finally setting goals for themselves that they were beginning to achieve. They only got there with the support of their families, and I pay tribute to those who have been the recipients of the Brain Injury Week awards.

SCHOOL FEES

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Can the Minister for Education and Children's Services assure us that Marryatville Primary

School and Marryatville High School are the only two schools in South Australia to have legitimately charged parents for school fees above the regulation maximum? After an FOI request seeking details of schools that have charged parents school fees above the regulation maximum, I was provided with documents showing that only Marryatville Primary and Marryatville High had undertaken the due process before charging parents more than the regulation maximum.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank the member for Mitchell for his question. It relates to schools fees and materials charges, for which there is a maximum routine level across the education system for those facilities. There is a process whereby schools undertake a poll of school communities and if, on a simple majority, those parents agree to a higher rate of charge they are allowed to put out those fees.

It is my understanding that there were some initial issues in the implementation of this policy, but as far as I know it is now running smoothly. All the accounts are according to the prescribed format that was laid down by the Education Department, and to my knowledge there are only two schools. But, if the member for Mitchell believes that there are extras we have not identified, I am very happy to look into that matter and get back to him, because I understood that the matter was going smoothly. In the case of those two schools, I understand that polls were conducted and that the parents agreed to higher fees and materials charges, but I am certainly happy to look into that if there is any doubt on the member's part.

PORT LINCOLN RECREATIONAL BOATING FACILITY

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. What support is the government providing for recreational boating at Port Lincoln?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Transport): I thank the honourable member for his unexpected question. The state government is contributing a deal of support to recreational boating at Port Lincoln. The Axel Stenross boat ramp in Port Lincoln is to be upgraded thanks to a major funding contribution from the state government. The project at Port Lincoln will prove to be an important asset to the local community and an important addition to South Australia's expanding network of quality, accessible and safe recreational boating facilities. Up to about \$770 000 will be allocated to the city of Port Lincoln by the state government for the landing, and the funding will come from the recreational boating facilities levy fund.

As members know, all recreational boat owners pay a levy on registered vessels into that fund, which is used to fund projects that establish and improve facilities for recreational boating. The City of Port Lincoln will also contribute to the boat ramp, and it is expected that the project will be completed within the next 12 months. When complete, ongoing maintenance and ownership of the facility will become the responsibility of that council.

As part of the conditions associated with the state government funding, the City of Port Lincoln is expected to develop a recreational boating facility strategy plan in concert with the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula. This development is consistent with the government's aim to establish South Australia as a prime recreational boating

location for both local boating enthusiasts and interstate and international visitors.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): Does the minister acknowledge that this project has been delayed by at least 12 months because of the failing of the previous minister to appoint the Recreational Boating Facility Fund committee?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The honourable member is asking me to comment on administrative actions before the time that I was minister, so, that is not something I can comment upon. I will just say that it is this government that is providing the City of Port Lincoln with around a \$770 000 funding contribution towards this important project—a project that did not get off the ground with the former Liberal government.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson had an outbreak of good behaviour and now he has relapsed.

HOSPITALS, RIVERLAND

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Health explain why the Riverland hospitals have been forced to reduce hospital services this year as a result of their budget allocation, and why an inflation rate of only two per cent has been allowed for in the current budget for the health region? The 2004-05 activity level of 7 388 hospital procedures, or those known to most of us as equisepts, for the Riverland region, as allocated by the department, is a cut to the lowest level since 1999-2000.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I am very pleased to answer this question, because the deputy leader is wrong.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Yes, again. The Riverland budget for health this year had an increase of 6 per cent over last year. The Riverland Health Authority, who bears the responsibility for distributing that money in relation to the services it supplies to its community, will be doing that as we speak. Let me say again, the Riverland's budget increased by 6 per cent.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: I was not referring specifically to the budget but I was referring to the fact that the activity level has been cut to 7 388 equisepts, and in fact that is exactly what the region has told the hospitals.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If the member wants a supplementary question, I will take it. Does the minister wish to respond to that?

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I have a lot of hospitals under my jurisdiction. I do not actually remember all the equisepts of all the different hospitals.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Well, that is terrific for you. Bully for you. I am really pleased that they actually allowed you into the room. I will reiterate again: the Riverland Health Authority had an increase of 6 per cent of its budget—and they may not be happy. Across the system, people would always like more in health. The point is, they got a 6 per cent increase in their budget and the Riverland Health Authority will now be allocating it.

Mr Brokenshire interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Mawson thinks that he can hide behind the member for Davenport he is fooling himself. The member for Giles.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Ms BREUER (Giles): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. Why is the outcome of the quality audit into the University of SA good for this state?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the member for Giles for asking me a question that is relevant to the portfolios I have responsibility for. Members would be aware that all universities are required to undergo a five yearly quality audit, conducted by the Australian Universities Quality Agency. In the latest audit of the University of South Australia it was noted that the university's performance was outstanding. On behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to congratulate the University of South Australia for achieving an impressive 16 commendations, which is among the highest number of commendations achieved by any university audited to this date. Members would remember that the University of South Australia was established in 1991, drawing together the South Australian Institute of Technology and the South Australian College of Advanced Education. On the basis of these two robust heritages, the university worked hard to establish itself as one of the three important universities in this state. It should also be noted that our current Premier was instrumental in the formation of this new university and, no doubt, he is pleased to see how it has progressed since that time.

The audit report commended the university in a number of areas, including: high quality planning and management; flexible course delivery and use of technology; support services to international students; quality assurance processes for off-shore programs; a range of community development activities; and its capital works plan. I note that the university received a commendation for the infrastructure plan, which has seen the construction of \$135 million worth of new buildings at Mawson Lakes. The audit highlighted a strong performance in a range of equity measures, particularly student access. The university was also seen to have made solid progress in developing its research capacity, and is a national leader in developing 'graduate qualities'. It also has a very well developed and quality controlled international program.

Obviously, the university is important to this state not just because it has an annual budget of \$300 million but because it is one of the state's most significant businesses. The university has also managed to achieve, based on deriving some 40 per cent of its income from commonwealth grants, with the rest of its revenue being raised through investments, fees and commercial activities, such as research and consultancies. This audit provides good news for the state and should lead to even better outcomes once the university reflects on how it can best respond to the other recommendations in the report for further improvement. I commend the University of South Australia. I am very pleased to have responsibility in the higher education area for the three universities. But in this case: congratulations to the University of South Australia.

HOSPITALS, FUNDING

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is again to the Minister for Health. Why has the government imposed an effective cut of 3 per cent on funding for the hospitals in Jamestown, Peterborough, Orroroo and Booleroo Centre, despite the fact that the hospitals ran at a deficit last year, and why has the minister provided no funds to replace broken hospital equipment? During a recent visit to these four hospitals with the member for Stuart, the hospitals highlighted these funding cuts to us, including funding for respite care being cut to almost nothing; \$300 000 being cut from the activity statement, compared to last year; and the steriliser at Peterborough needed urgent replacement, but there are no funds to replace it.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): All country regions receive their budgets and, as I said in relation to the Riverland Health Authority, all regional health service authorities are currently in discussions with the department in relation to their health service agreements. In relation to the country budgets I remind members (and maybe it would be informative for people to listen) that, unlike what the deputy leader is saying in relation to major cuts, regional boards are allocating to individual services. This year the country budget contains an extra \$8.7 million for the country health regions—an extra \$1.7 million over four years for the patient assisted transport scheme, an extra \$4.2 million over four years to support increased nursing levels in the country, an extra \$900 000 over four years for the dental program (22 per cent of the \$4.5 million state-wide figure announced in the budget), and an additional \$1.2 million towards country home and community care programs for this year. Of the \$8 million increase over four years for elective surgery in metropolitan hospitals, 10 per cent to 15 per cent will be spent on country patients, and we must not forget that, of the extra \$20 million over four years that was allocated last year in October to country health regions, \$5.53 million is funded in 2004-05.

So, the deputy leader can talk about the issues that he has heard, and certainly all of our hospitals and health services are under pressure (there is no doubt about that); but let us remember that this is the best and the biggest health budget that those hospitals in those regions, country or city, have ever had.

MULTICULTURAL FESTIVALS

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Can the minister advise, given our reputation as the Festival State and the complexity of organising a festival, what the government has done to assist multicultural community groups to manage this difficult task?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Multicultural Affairs): The member for Norwood is renowned as an outstanding ethnic festival organiser. The member for Norwood was instrumental in organising the Italian Festival before it became the Carnevale. South Australia has some fine festivals and events, and one of the features of this state's festival calendar is the range of multicultural festivals and events organised by our diverse ethnic communities. Each year, Multicultural SA produces a useful multicultural calendar that lists the many festivals, events and days of celebration. During their regular consultations with the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission,

community groups have raised concerns about various aspects of organising festivals and events. They tell us that, each year, event organisation is becoming more complicated and more costly.

So, in November 2003, I asked the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission Chairman, Mr John Kiosoglous, to meet with the organisers of some of South Australia's important multicultural festivals to identify ways of dealing with these difficulties. As a result of that meeting, in February this year the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission and Multicultural SA held a further meeting, attended by about 50 people who represented festivals and events such as Schutzenfest, Carnevale, Glendi, Lions Multicultural Festival and the Indian Mela Festival, to name just a few.

During this meeting, information was presented about planning safe public events and the many responsibilities and statutory obligations that face organisers. Participants at that meeting in February agreed that they needed more comprehensive training in the various aspects of managing festivals and events.

I am glad that the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission and Multicultural SA responded by arranging for Mr Steve Brown, a lecturer in festival and events management at Flinders University, to run two workshops in August. In addition to lecturing in events management, Steve Brown has been an experienced and accomplished organiser of small and major events in most states of Australia. The workshops were held at the German Club in Wakefield Street, and I am pleased that the German Club made the premises available at no cost. Almost 50 people participated in the training workshops. Among the participants were event organisers from many regional areas, such as Mount Gambier, the Riverland, Yorke Peninsula, Whyalla and Port Lincoln.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Well, I am sorry that the member for Schubert does not want to hear about this successful organisation. It is a pity he trivialises multicultural festivals.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney-General should ignore the member for Schubert.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: It is even more a pity the honourable member never turns up to one. The South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission and Multicultural SA provided funds for travel and lodging to enable the regional participants to attend. The workshops covered many areas including occupational health and safety, insurance—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, the member for Hartley is out of order!

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: No doubt the member for Hartley in his objection to what I am saying will have the member for Heysen give a grievance on his behalf to stick up for him.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Captain Brave over there, the member for Hartley, has to hide behind the skirts of the member for Heysen.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order, sir. Mr Deputy Speaker, I think you realise—as does the whole

house—that the Attorney-General is quite out of order in what he is now saying.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Attorney-General is straying from the substance of the question. I think the Attorney-General should wind up his answer.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The workshops covered risk management; emergency arrangements; responsibility to police, local government and the Environment Protection Authority; licences; signage; training of volunteers and employees; keeping records; and operational matters. The workshops raised matters that many of the organisers had never even considered. Multicultural festivals and events play an important role in strengthening understanding across cultures and between communities. They give opportunities for communities to showcase the things that they most value and of which they are most proud. They give us all an opportunity to enjoy ourselves. The workshops for organisers of festivals and events will not guarantee that they will not have any problems in the future, but I am confident that they will be better prepared now than they were before to handle the many challenges involved in organising these festivals.

HAMPSTEAD REHABILITATION CENTRE, GYMNASIUM

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): Would the Minister for Health advise the house why long-time disabled users of the Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre's spinal unit's gymnasium are now being charged a commercial fee to use equipment donated by the Wheelchair Sports Association? One of my constituents, who is a pensioner and disabled, must now pay \$3.50 each time he uses the gymnasium facilities at the Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre, along with \$4 each time he uses the centre's pool. With his twice weekly visits to these needed facilities, he is being forced to pay approximately \$60 a month (\$720 a year), which is more than all-inclusive memberships at many commercial gymnasiums. I have been advised that the majority of the equipment in the gymnasium was donated by the Wheelchair Sports Association over 15 years; therefore, without cost to government.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I am not aware of the details so I can't give an answer today, but I will certainly take the matter on board and get an answer for the honourable member.

MEMBER'S REMARKS

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr SCALZI: Last Tuesday, 14 September, I was the member referred to by the member for Heysen in her grievance debate. The member for Norwood has spoken to me regarding the incident. I have stated publicly that I do not believe that it is appropriate behaviour to pinch someone's bottom. As the member for Heysen stated in her grievance, if a male MP did the same, they would be pilloried.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I rise on a point of order. The honourable member has been given a lot of leeway, but where is the misrepresentation? This is nothing but his own

grievance.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Hartley has to use this as a personal explanation. He has made the point; he has identified that he was the victim.

Mr SCALZI: I am coming to it, Mr Deputy Speaker, apart from being misrepresented by the Attorney-General. I quote from the *Advertiser* article, as follows:

Ms Ciccarello defended her actions, saying—

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: On a point of order, this is a nonsense. He can make a grievance if he wishes. This is a grievance, not a personal explanation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hartley is straying from the standing orders. He is making a statement, not an explanation. He needs to wrap it up very quickly.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I rise on a point of order. Could the member for Hartley tell the house how I misrepresented him? What were the words that misrepresented him?

Mr SCALZI: I have two sentences, if they stop interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member needs to wrap it up quickly.

Mr SCALZI: I quote from the *Advertiser*, as follows:

Ms Ciccarello defended her actions, saying it was part of her cultural background and the MP she pinched came from the same background.

I come from the same ethnic background but I do not pinch people's bottoms and Italian women find it offensive.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hartley was definitely going beyond standing orders.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

HOSPITALS, MOUNT GAMBIER

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I wish to grieve concerning a letter that has been sent to me by Dr Kevin Johnston, who is the specialist anaesthetist at Mount Gambier. In his letter, Dr Johnston says:

The CEO of the Mount Gambier Hospital, where as you know I have worked as the only specialist anaesthetist for 10 years, has currently blocked payment of my \$70 000 of funds owing to my one-man specialist medical practice.

\$20 000 of this money was an agreed reimbursement for medical indemnity for the last two years, a portion of which has already been outstanding for over 12 months. Under the current interim contract arrangement, the hospital guaranteed me a minimum of \$125 000 worth of public work, for elective surgery, every six months. As Director of Anaesthetics, I am required to equally distribute the total anaesthetic workload between the four anaesthetists in my department. In the last six-month period (Jan-June 04) my 25 per cent portion of the workload only amounts to around \$75 000. The shortfall of \$50 000, payable in June 04, forms the remainder of the outstanding \$70 000.

This recurrent shortfall is a reflection of the pattern of reduced surgical activity, occurring in Mount Gambier, since the loss of two of the three general surgeons (Landy, Kirkby) and both obstetricians (Barry, Henshaw) three years ago. By my estimation elective surgery is currently running at less than 50 per cent of the levels achieved prior to 2001-02.

The justification by the CEO for not paying the outstanding fees is that, having myself suffered a suspected heart attack while at work in June this year, I was forced to take a period of sick leave for investigations to be done in Adelaide. (Three weeks during the contract period in question.) The CEO has stated that, because I was unfit to work, and was forced to take sick leave on medical advice,

I was in breach of contract by not being available! Even though my illness occurred at work and was undoubtedly work induced.

As a result the hospital saw fit to retain not only fees for the three week period when I was away but all outstanding fees owed to my medical practice for the last six-month period and even some dating back over 12 months. The hospital offered to pay only \$8 175.15 in place of the \$70 000+ outstanding. I have offered to make up the lost time in the future or to accept an appropriate reduction of outstanding fees for the period I was away—these offers have not been accepted.

And so the letter goes on. This letter highlights two very significant issues. First, it is very revealing that the department of health has stopped paying medical specialists for the work already carried out. It is further evidence that country doctors are being devalued by the Rann government. It is further evidence that medical specialists who live in the country clearly are not wanted by this Labor government and are being driven out in some stupid manner, as they already have at Mount Gambier. It is also evidence that there has been a significant slash in the amount of surgical work being carried out at the Mount Gambier Hospital. In fact, Dr Johnston said in his letter that it would appear that the amount of surgical work carried out that required anaesthetists has been halved, or is less than half of the level carried out prior to 2001-02.

That is alarming. Here is the first tangible evidence that what the minister has done at Mount Gambier has been a disaster in terms of health services for Mount Gambier. But, most importantly, I take up the case for Dr Johnston. He deserves this money as quickly as possible. For a department of health to stop payment for work already carried out under an existing contract just because more recently the doctor has had three weeks off with a suspected heart complaint I think is totally unacceptable. In fact, I point out that the CEO of the hospital was put into that position, and I remember the Minister for Health and the member for Gordon rushing to my room and asking that I no longer raise issues about the Mount Gambier Hospital whilst the CEO was in that state.

Time expired.

BISHOP NEKTARIOS

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Last week, I was in the midst of an obituary for Bishop Nektarios Kellis when my time expired. I continue. Throughout the history of Mauritius, there has never been an Orthodox Christian presence on the island. On 23 September 1997, the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria separated Madagascar from the metropolis of Zimbabwe. Mauritius and Reunion were added to the newly established Diocese of Madagascar. In September 2000, with the blessing of Patriarch Petros of Alexandria, Bishop Nektarios made his first official visit to Mauritius, where he held the first Orthodox Divine Liturgy in English and baptised the first native Mauritian Orthodox people, thus setting up the first Orthodox mission.

His Beatitude Petros VII, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria, who was also killed in the crash, had conducted his first pastoral visit to Madagascar in February this year. On his visit he was quoted as saying:

We do not want to divide the nations and tribes of Africa, but to unite them.

The Patriarch of Alexandria traces its lineage back to one of the first Disciples of Christ. I was privileged last year to meet him on my visit to Greece. His Grace Bishop Nektarios, was quoted recently as saying:

Please listen carefully. . . to the beating of the hearts of your children here and especially the little black angels whose eyes shine with joy seeing you amongst them and never forget their most expressive look.

This legacy is now passed on to us to continue. It is also true to say that, indeed, now it is us who will never forget such a loving, generous and devoted person but, above all, a worthy child of Christ.

Mr Brindal: I missed that; can you say that again?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: A worthy child of Christ. On behalf of the South Australian government I extend my condolences to His Grace's parents, brother and sister-in-law and families and to the Greek Orthodox faithful for such a loss. We mourn the tragic deaths of His Beatitude Patriarch Petros VII of Alexandria, His Grace Bishop Nektarios of Madagascar and their delegation that included Archimandrite Arseneos, Abbot of the Machaira Monastery, Archimandrite Kallistratos Economou, patriarchal aides Patroklos Papastefanou and Georgios Xenoudakis, the Patriarch's brother Georgios Papapetrou, Bishop Chrysostomos of Carthage, Metropolitan Irinaios of Pilousio and cleric Nektarios Kontongiorgos (a close friend of current Archimandrite of the Croydon Park Monastery, Father Alexandros), as well as five army officers who accompanied them who were also killed in a helicopter crash in the Aegean on 11 September 2004. May their memories be eternal.

CHILD ABUSE

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Today I rise to grieve on the 'Senate inquiry into children who have suffered abuse while in institutional care' report recently tabled in this house by the minister. If people doubt the efficacy of upper houses, and especially the Senate in Australia, they should look at some of the reports of the work that the Senate does. This report is some 400 pages long, and it is a seminal report of great moment to every citizen of Australia, to the federal parliament, and not least to state jurisdictions. I found it interesting that, having tabled the report, the minister has announced to the house no action, and has as yet done nothing about it. The minister can say that he has tabled it only a week ago—and that is true—but I had read the greater majority of it when he tabled it, because it was available at least a week before that. I know my colleague the shadow minister had certainly read it well before then, because we had discussed some of the findings.

One of the pivotal findings takes an example from the Attorney's colleagues in the Queensland parliament. Faced with the same sort of situation as we find with people who had been in institutional care all over Australia throughout the fifties, sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties (the latter being of course in foster care), the Queensland parliament took some action. As a result of a similar inquiry, they established a foundation called the Ford Foundation, which provides assistance to victims in the form of grants for specified uses. The Ford Foundation is jointly funded by the Queensland government and the churches who operated the state institutions at the time. It is not a compensation fund, sir; as you would understand, compensation is a court matter and can be dealt with only by the court. Rather, it is rather a reparation fund. The \$2 million provided by the state government of Queensland and the money provided by the churches was invested, and the interest is used on an annual basis.

People who are victims are allowed to apply to a small board, which looks on a need by need basis to help these

people. Women who were in the Goodwood Orphanage, for example, may have low literacy and skills levels, and so they might apply to do a literacy course to assist them to up-skill to get into university, to get some job hunting skills, and to do all sorts of things. Some of these women are in their 50s, some are older, some are younger, but they are not yet at the end of their lives and they need help, and this fund is to help them. The Premier of South Australia has condemned paedophilia and sex abuse in all forms. He has said little, but I am sure that he would say equally much about the horrendous forms of physical abuse endured by children in many of our orphanages. Some members of this house try to excuse it by saying, 'You have got to see it in the context of its time.' As I have said before, I was a teacher who used to use corporal punishment, and I am not proud of it but, whether it be the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s, or the 1990s, every person in this state, every person in this parliament, every person, I think, worldwide, knows the difference between corporal punishment and damn outright cruelty, and what some of these kids had done to them had no excuse at all. There can be no excuse, and those who perpetrated it should be brought to justice in exactly the same way as paedophiles are now being sought to be brought to justice.

No financial assistance has been offered to the many victims of abuse in our state system who have come forward. This is a scheme which would show good faith on behalf of the government and on behalf of others involved and might be one step on the road to reconciliation. It is about time that this government got off its backside, started being proactive and did something for these victims of horrendous abuse. They were not in office, my party may not have been in office, but all of us were in office over time, and all of us have a responsibility for kids who were thrashed senseless, tortured and beaten in a first world country right under the noses of most members of this parliament while they were growing up.

WHYALLA BLAST FURNACE

Ms BREUER (Giles): Yesterday I was pleased to attend the opening by the Premier in Whyalla of the number two blast furnace following its recent reline. It was a beautiful Whyalla day. It was warm, excellent weather—flies were a bit of a problem—but it was a great day to showcase our city to the OneSteel board who came along to the opening. That included the chair, Peter Smedley. It was attended by senior management of OneSteel, Mr Bob Every, Mr Leo Sellick and Mr Jim White. It was an exciting day for Whyalla, because yesterday assured our future. During the two months that it took to reline the furnace, steel and iron production stopped and OneSteel invested some \$170 million into the project, so it was huge. Outsiders, perhaps, would not understand the significance to Whyalla, but it assures us of a future in our city. This was the second longest serving blast furnace in the world. It was quite a record; that blast furnace operated for 23 years without a reline and it was only about three months short of a world record. Twenty-three years was an amazing period for it to be serving, because normally they last for about seven or eight years.

The other thing that was wonderful about this project was the safety record in the relining—no one was hurt. If you could see the project and what it involved, if you could see the location of the work, you would see that it is really an amazing achievement for OneSteel, and I certainly give my sincere congratulations and credit to all those who were

involved in that project. It was a boon for Whyalla. An additional 500 workers came into the city and lived there, so it was a boon for our city having those workers there, and they did an amazing effort. Not many years ago, I can remember that Whyalla was in a dire position, because OneSteel was about to be formed and BHP had a choice between Whyalla and Newcastle. I was very aware that they were going to close down either Newcastle or Whyalla.

I was very aware of the situation at the time because I was quite involved in it. I was aware of the seriousness of our position. However, I can confidently say that we are at a very exciting stage. We are confident about our future, and you can really feel that in our city now. When the Economic Development Board visited Whyalla last week, I was very pleased that we were able to show them how much confidence we have in our future.

Also, OneSteel recently announced the \$250 million Project Magnet in Whyalla, which will see the Whyalla steelworks converted to produce from magnetite rather than haematite iron ore. This will extend the life of the steelworks from 2020 to at least 2027 and allow OneSteel to sell more of its haematite ore, iron pellets and steel slabs. It will generate more than \$1 billion revenue over 10 years and will lower the cost of producing steel at the Whyalla steelworks. Whyalla steelworks produces 65 per cent of OneSteel's steel. So we are very pleased about that. The project will also have a beneficial impact on the fugitive dust we suffer in Whyalla in a very small part of our town. This has been an ongoing problem since the pellet plant was built some 30 years ago, but converting the pelletising process from a dry to a wet operation will significantly reduce the dust from the pellet plant. An amount of \$250 million will cover the mine cutback, and the beneficiation facilities, and a slurry pipeline will be built from the mines to Whyalla. The Whyalla pellet plant will be converted, a desulfurisation plant will be constructed, and the port storage and handling facilities will be upgraded.

When we were cast off by BHP (which is the way we saw it in Whyalla) a short time ago, the town was absolutely desolate. However, I can now say that we in Whyalla have embraced OneSteel as our own company, and the company feels comfortable with OneSteel and feels like it is its own company. We are certainly a pivotal centre in OneSteel's operations in Australia, and we acknowledge that fact and are very happy about it. I not only congratulate all those people involved in the blast furnace relines but also those involved in OneSteel for the wonderful achievements they have made in a very short time. They have assured our city of a future, and, on behalf of our community, I thank OneSteel very much for that.

SCHOOL CRIME PREVENTION

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Today, I rise to bring to the attention of the house the excellent work done by the City of Campbelltown in its involvement with the School Crime Prevention Debates 2004. I congratulate the organisers and participants in the recent debate series on the theme 'Violence prevention and awareness', and it is certainly appropriate today. A special acknowledgment must go to Mayor Steve Woodcock and the Campbelltown council, and Mr Rob Smith, Manager of Community development, and also Mr Andrew Patterson, the Regional Crime Prevention Coordinator, who developed the debate program as part of the council's program aimed at addressing violence against women and young people. The project aimed to create

awareness and reduce impact, and other strategies included meeting with community groups and schools, and funding posters in ad shells at bus stops in the area, and just generally to make people aware of the problems with violence in our society.

The inaugural debate series involved four local schools: Charles Campbell Secondary School; St Ignatius College, Athelstone; Norwood Morialta High School; and Rostrevor College. I was fortunate to attend the grand final debate on 8 September, and was very impressed at the standard of presentation. The first round debate on the topic 'Violence can solve problems' resulted in Charles Campbell Secondary School and Rostrevor College meeting in the grand final. In the final debate 'Violent offenders should be rehabilitated, not incarcerated', Charles Campbell argued in the affirmative and Rostrevor in the negative. After a strong performance by both schools, Rostrevor College took the prize on the night. Campbelltown council has funded this project separately from the Regional Crime Prevention Program, at a cost of \$6 500 for the whole project.

It must be commended and congratulated for continuing with strategies for crime prevention. A trophy was provided by the City of Campbelltown and presented by Mayor Woodcock, and the South Australian Police Blue Light Association donated cash awards for the winners. Council hopes that debates may be held in the future on a range of themes to complement local crime prevention programs. I would also encourage other councils to consider introducing similar initiatives involving local schools and to encourage young people to engage with issues that are very topical in our state and which are central to our justice system and the security of our community.

I am often privileged to attend school functions and youth forums in South Australia and am invariably amazed at the sophisticated grasp of complex social issues demonstrated by our young people and their contribution to discussion on current issues. This night was one such evening. Anybody who attended the debate would have seen the standard and the thought that had gone into the debate on such an important issue. We all talk about crime prevention and law and order. Unless we develop a culture of understanding the real issues associated with law and order, we will not solve our problems. These young people who debated on that evening showed that they have an understanding of the real issues facing young people and the public in general in relation to community safety and how to get the best outcome for a safe community.

There must be rehabilitation and we must look at the problems of literacy, numeracy and the health of those who are incarcerated because, unless we look at it properly, we will not make any headway in dealing with law and order. It is just not good enough to be tough on crime: we must understand crime in its full perspective and have programs in place. I believe encouraging young people to debate these issues is one important step. I commend those involved.

Time expired.

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I think many members would have noticed that Amnesty International was holding an important event on the steps of Parliament House today, and that was a demonstration (a very effective demonstration) to give the message to stop violence against women. Members were all invited to have their hand print placed on a

banner and sign it; and I saw a number of members there, including the member for Colton. I would like to talk a little about why that rally was necessary. The Amnesty International fact sheet shows that 80 per cent of the refugees around the world are women and children. Trafficking of women and girls was reported in 85 per cent of conflict zones. In Rwanda between 250 000 and 500 000 women (or about 20 per cent of all women) were raped during the 1994 genocide. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 20 000 to 50 000 women were raped during five months of conflict in 1992. In some villages in Kosovo, 30 per cent to 50 per cent of women of child-bearing age were raped by Serbian forces.

These are tragic figures and show today's manifestation of how, through the ages, raping women and very young girls has been frequently—in fact, almost inevitably—associated with war. We have already spoken in this house at a previous time about the issue of the organised rape of women during World War II and noted Jan Ruff-O'Herne and her very strong and heroic contribution on this topic. Another World Health Organisation survey shows that, for up to 47 per cent of women, their first encounter of sexual intercourse was forced. That is a tragic sort of experience for young people to endure.

Closer to home, a Victorian health study showed that intimate partner violence accounts for 8 per cent of the total disease burden in Victorian women aged between 15 and 44 years. Mother and Child research just released shows that 40 per cent of violence first occurs during pregnancy and that violence increases the chance of postnatal depression. Some 30 per cent of abortions in women aged between 20 and 40 are due to conception during sexual assault occurring in domestic violence. Young women who are treated violently are up to three times more likely to miscarry and more likely to have a stillbirth, premature birth or abortion, according to a large Australian survey of women and violence. These figures are an indictment on our community in Australia and the world community. So many women are not able to go about their business and enjoy sexual intercourse but, rather, have it forced on them.

The figures in relation to domestic violence without sexual assault are also disturbing. Last week most members noticed a report in *The Advertiser* from a conference about women at risk during footy finals time. It was reported that a paper at this conference indicated that there is an increase in violence during football finals time. I have subsequently found that the reports are about a 10 per cent increase in violence, both sexual assault and domestic violence.

Port Power is a wonderful team. Its supporters are absolutely fantastic. As a frequent attender at Port Power games, I know that Port Power's support is fanatical and positive. There has been a change in football support over the 20 years or so I have been regularly attending. It is much more positive. I ask all Port Power supporters, when they are celebrating on Saturday evening, to celebrate in a respectful way, not to get carried away, not to go over the top, but to respect the women who are celebrating with them in order to ensure that Port Power is able to demonstrate its superiority in this way above all other teams.

ADVOCATES FOR THE SURVIVORS

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: During question time today I made an interjection which, I believed, was misrepresented by the member for Bright but, on looking at the *Hansard*, I can understand some members may have felt that I was referring to the Advocates for the Survivors when I made an interjection about the motivations of the opposition and its questioning. Can I make it very clear that is not to whom I was referring. I apologise for any offence taken. It was not directed—

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will say that. I was referring to scurrilous rumours which are circulating and which involve various individuals that, I believe, from the government's and my point of view, are being promoted by the opposition. I do not think for any moment that an esteemed body such as the Advocates for the Survivors would ever be behind that. That was not to whom I was referring.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from 16 September. Page 112.)

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): The Rann government was elected claiming it would make health care its No. 1 priority. It said it would shorten waiting times for elective surgery; ensure patients in emergency departments of major hospitals would not have long waits; and spend more on rebuilding hospitals. For people in the country, it promised to improve services, having criticised the closure of birthing services at two country hospitals through the lack of appropriate obstetric and anaesthetic skills of local GPs at Roxby Downs and Ceduna. So, 2½ years have passed since the election of the Rann government and the appointment of Lea Stevens as the minister. Now is an appropriate time to cut through the rhetoric and to look at the facts. I do so using the government's own reports, budgets and statements.

The most marked change has been the sharp deterioration in the performance of our major hospitals in providing care and health services. The two most recent elective surgery bulletins published by the government tell the grim story. The facts are that under Labor, there are over 11 000 people waiting for surgery, the highest ever recorded in South Australia—an increase of 1 735. There has been a 47 per cent increase in the number of people waiting more than 12 months for surgery, and patients needing all types of surgery are waiting on average considerably longer. Behind each person waiting for surgery there is anxiety, uncertainty and often intense pain. Delays for surgery to remove cancers or deal with serious heart problems can be potentially life-threatening, yet that is now occurring.

The performance of the emergency departments in our major hospitals such as the Flinders Medical Centre has deteriorated markedly since the change of government. Last year, the delays and pressures within the emergency department at Flinders became so bad it was officially deemed to be unsafe, in about March last year, and then grossly unsafe by December last year. For example, the portion of urgent emergency patients seen within the recommended period of

30 minutes has deteriorated by 35 per cent under Labor. A recent survey showed that in South Australia 41 per cent of emergency department patients had to wait more than eight hours for a hospital bed, this being worse than the national average.

One of the most common political excuses of the Rann government ministers is that numerous other projects such as the Women's Prison and Youth Detention Centre cannot proceed because the money is going to rebuild our hospitals. The reality is that this is a great myth. Just look at the figures. In the last Liberal budget in 2001, \$147 million was allocated to build new hospital facilities. On top of that, \$15 million was allocated through HomeStart to build aged care facilities in the country. The Labor government scrapped the \$15 million of HomeStart money for aged care facilities. As a result, there is a critical shortage of aged care facilities now in country centres such as Millicent and Kingscote.

In last year's Labor budget, only \$130 million was allocated to build new hospitals, \$17 million less than the Liberals two years earlier. To make matters far worse, of the \$130 million allocated in the budget, only \$95 million was actually spent. As a result, \$35 million was lost back to the clutches of the Treasurer, who suffers from a little known disorder called compulsive AAA rating. In the 2004 budget, the health minister had the gall to say an extra \$35 million was allocated to rebuild hospitals but only allocated then \$130 million—the same as the previous year. There was no increase. As a result of this mismanagement, the Rann government has failed to spend millions of dollars on key hospital facilities such as the Margaret Tobin mental health facility at Flinders Medical Centre, where they underspent by \$7.9 million last year; the Lyell McEwin hospital redevelopment, where they failed to spend \$8.9 million; the cancer equipment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, where they failed to spend \$3.6 million; mental health facilities at the Repatriation Hospital, where they failed to spend \$1.9 million; and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital redevelopment for the next stage, where they failed to spend \$0.9 million. Even this year, the Minister for Health is unlikely to spend the \$130 million allocated in the budget, because four major projects have stalled for six months or more due to administrative arguments about funding.

Those new hospital facilities that have been built and opened, such as the Royal Adelaide, the Queen Elizabeth, the Lyell McEwin, Modbury and Flinders Medical Centre, were all planned, approved and largely built under the previous Liberal government. The Premier has sent out thousands of letters suggesting that these hospital projects were Labor projects. Nothing could be further from the truth nor the fact.

Mental illness is the fastest growing disease within our community. It needs to be given top priority and an understanding and commitment by the minister. In June 2000, the Liberal government released the plan for the future, prepared by Dr Peter Brennan and Dr Margaret Tobin. With its strong emphasis on improved community-based mental health services and improved mental health facilities, it had overwhelming support.

One area of need was to increase supported residential care for people with mental illnesses living in the community. The most recent reports show a huge reduction in supported residential care due to the closure of many of the supported residential facilities (SRFs). Although the three facilities initiated by the Liberal government at the time are open and providing care, the lack of effective government support for existing supported residential facilities has seen the closure

of about 15 other facilities, and others are pending closure. Hundreds of people with mental illness have been left to fend for themselves in the community without support.

This is part of the crisis in mental health services that has emerged in the past year. Frances Nelson QC, the Chair of the Parole Board, and others, have been crying out for more staff, support and facilities for forensic mental health. The government's only response has been to shoot the messenger. The lack of staff and the breakdown in services is now putting the safety of the public and the patients at risk, as seen by a recent murder, another suspected murder and several serious assaults. There is such a shortage of staff that it takes three months to obtain a forensic psychiatric report on a patient.

Almost every time another mental health crisis is raised publicly, the Minister for Health highlights her seven new mental health facilities to be built. The reality is that these seven projects were listed in this year's budget, but not one dollar was allocated for these projects for the current financial year (2004-05). Money for design work to start only four of the seven projects is allocated in 2005-06 (next year), and most of the projects will not be finished for at least six years. Where is the priority rather than the media spin? The mental health facility at the Repatriation General Hospital was one where allocated money last year of \$1.9 million was not spent. New building will not even start on this project for another two years.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy in mental health is the near collapse of community-based support services. On coming to office, the Rann government promised to look at the future with the Generational Health Review (known as the GHR). It was chaired by John Menadue, who had chaired a similar review in New South Wales in the 1990s. Two overall conclusions were reached. The first (which I endorse fully) is the need to strengthen our primary health care, particularly with an ageing population. The second was a restructure of hospital boards, which meant abolishing individual hospital boards and establishing large regional boards to administer the hospitals in the regions. Three such boards have been established in the Adelaide metropolitan area. The model is based on the New South Wales model which, in turn, is based on the model adopted in Britain in the 1980s.

The establishment of these boards and the creation of new bureaucracy has been the main action arising from the Generational Health Review. Ironically, in the past 12 months, the British Labor government has scrapped the regional health boards and appointed new boards for each hospital; in other words, they have gone back to where they were in the 1980s. The reason is that the regional boards were found to be too bureaucratic and inefficient and lacked sound management control over the individual hospitals. Equally, the New South Wales Labor government has announced the scrapping of its regional health boards because of their mounting operational failure. South Australia seems to be taking a generational step backwards.

One specific recommendation of the Generational Health Review given a priority was the establishment of a 24-hour health hotline: 15 months later, it still does not exist. At the same time, there has been no tangible change to primary health care in the state. In fact, in the most recent budget, funds for health promotion initiatives were cut. Out of the Generational Health Review, misguided attempts were made to close the neonatal unit at the Flinders Medical Centre, which, fortunately, was then stopped by a protest from mothers and staff. They attempted to amalgamate the Repatriation General Hospital with the Flinders Medical

Centre, which, again, was fortunately stopped by strong opposition from veterans and the RSL. The Generational Health Review also proposed to abolish country hospital boards, which was stopped, again fortunately, by a community backlash. Out of the Generational Health Review, country hospitals are required to review their clinical services. The two most advanced reviews are being carried out in the Riverland and South-East regions by Carol Gaston, Deputy Chair of the Generational Health Review.

The first draft for the Riverland recommends stopping births at Loxton, Renmark and Barmera and stopping surgery at Loxton, Waikerie and perhaps Renmark. The local communities are devastated, as they have worked so hard to establish their local hospitals over many years. These communities see their hospital services as being essential to attract doctors and to keep the social fabric of the communities together.

In the South-East a similar stench of uncertainty hangs over the hospitals at Bordertown, Naracoorte, Penola and Millicent. These communities have seen the devastation inflicted on medical and hospital services at Mount Gambier. Fifteen months ago the government refused to renew the contracts of more than half the resident medical specialists in Mount Gambier, and many of the specialists therefore left town. As a result, surgical and anaesthetic specialists must be flown in daily, or weekly, for locums. Costs have soared, the amount of surgery performed has crashed, and health services for the local communities have suffered. The amazing issue is that the health minister sat by and watched the Mount Gambier catastrophe develop and did not lift a finger. So much for improving our health services.

The flow-on from the Mount Gambier crisis was that the very experienced obstetrician from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital's birthing unit went to Mount Gambier to fill a vacancy and, as a result, the birthing unit at the Queen Elizabeth hospital was closed without a senior obstetrician specialist. That occurred in April. It is now September and a replacement specialist has not been found and the birthing unit remains closed. How long is a 'temporary' closure, as described by the minister? I highlight the point that whilst the current Minister for Health was critical of what were temporary closures of birthing units at both the Roxby Downs and the Ceduna hospitals because the local GPs did not have the skills, this same minister—who fear-mongered so much in the past about the Queen Elizabeth Hospital—is the one who was minister when, in fact, that birthing unit closed.

I mentioned earlier the glib political rhetoric that all this extra money was going into health, yet at the same time country hospital boards are complaining about the last three budgets being the most difficult they have ever faced. Each year there has been an effective cut of 3 per cent as inflation and wage costs are not adequately covered. In the most recent budget, an inflation rate of only 2 per cent was allowed and funded and significant savings targets have been imposed on each of the health regions and/or hospitals.

Last year the large metropolitan hospitals were so underfunded that they incurred a combined debt of \$30.5 million. The expectation was that this debt would be covered with extra funds provided last year—instead, the \$30 million was paid from the increase in the 2004-05 budget allocation (that is, the budget put down for this current year) which at the time was boasted as being provided to ease the delays for surgery and emergency department treatment in the coming year. I point out that as a result of that we now find our metropolitan hospitals unable to ease the pressure within

those major hospitals simply because the money has been used to pay for last year's debt rather than being allocated to cover any new services which the minister keeps talking about and which, obviously, have not occurred.

The budget commentators and the media at the time of the state budget were clearly all conned, as \$30 million of this year's money has now gone to pay for last year's debts. An example of the shortage of funds can be seen at the Lyell McEwin hospital. In the previous Liberal government's redevelopment of the hospital 15 new intensive care beds and 8 new coronary care beds were built and opened last year. However, due to the shortage of funds in June this year only six of the intensive care beds and only four of the coronary care beds were open and operating—this is despite the shortage of hospital beds in Adelaide and, in fact, one could say the critical shortage of hospital beds in Adelaide. Completion of the next two stages of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital rebuilding program has been delayed for more than two years with the \$0.9 million allocated last year remaining unspent. At the Lyell McEwin hospital \$8.9 million allocated to new buildings last year did not get spent.

The Australian Medical Association made a special cabinet submission to the Rann government to increase spending on replacing old medical equipment in hospitals, stating that otherwise lives could be put at risk. The response of the government in the most recent budget was to cut funding for such medical equipment by \$1.5 million. In other words, they went in exactly the opposite direction from what the AMA recommended.

Extra money has gone into creating new bureaucracies. First, the Rann government split the previous department into two so that they could employ two CEOs, on about \$250 000 per year, rather than one. I might add that they then created a new bureaucracy around each of those CEOs. Then they created three new regional boards with a whole new level of administration. There has been no compensating reduction in hospital administrators—in fact, just the opposite. When the CEO of the Flinders Medical Centre resigned earlier this year, seven staff all received special additional payments for higher duties and an extra temporary staff member was appointed.

The real stories behind the deteriorating performance of our public hospitals have been the human stories. There are so many to tell: the young lad with chronic tonsillitis who is told that it will be 18 months before he has the operation; elderly people in intense pain, unable to get a night's sleep, being told that there is a 12 to 14 month wait to see an orthopaedic specialist, with a further wait of 12 to 18 months for the surgery; the many people with mental illnesses, and their anxious families, crying out for some support and care in the community; and the grieving families who have seen their loved ones die without the appropriate treatment. These people see the credibility gap between the daily rhetoric and spin from the Rann government, and the reality of the health services available. That is not a criticism of the medical and nursing staff who are required to work under increasing pressure. Their commitment and care is appreciated by the patients, their families and the community. It is a criticism of the Rann government and the Minister for Health, for failing to provide our health services with the funds, the staff, and the facilities they need to maintain and improve the health care of our ageing population.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): I note the comments from the member for Kavel when he said that only one or two

members of the government had spoken, and I remind the government of a little saying, 'We should fear the silence of our friends, not the voices of our enemies.' I hope that we hear more from the government benches before this debate is out. There is one thing about South Australia that I am very proud of, and that is the quality of the governors that we have been appointing in recent years—certainly with Sir Eric Neal, and now Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson Nelson, and their loyal deputy, Mr Bruno Krumins, we are being very well served and have been very well served in the past. It was delightful to have Mr Krumins deliver a speech on behalf of the government. It is his rich accent that I think adds to the delivery of this speech, and there was one particular point in this speech where I got quite excited when he was talking about the government's infrastructure budget. He read out the following:

TransAdelaide will carry out its largest capital works programs for many years. It will include improvements to rail networks, infrastructure, an increased focus on security and safety, and the transformation of the Glenelg-to-City tram into a modern light-rail transit line.

I was excited about the fact that this was actually happening after many years, but with His Excellency's rich accent, it sounded like he said, 'The Glenelg to Sydney tram,' and I thought, 'Wow! That is an extension past North Adelaide.' It is not going quite that far. I was very pleased to see, in Friday's paper, the photograph of the Bombardier Flexity Classic tram. I was lucky enough to have driven one of these trams in Europe last year. Bombardier are one of the three tram manufacturers around the world that make excellent trams. This is a great tram, the Bombardier Flexity, the Classic, but I am not sure that it is the tram for Adelaide. I look forward to seeing what the minister has to say about this tram. I understand, though, and I'm very concerned if what I have been told is true, that this is a special order to be delivered by a time line. I hope beyond all hope that that is not a cynical act on behalf of this government to have trams running by the next election because, if that is the case, we have not got the Melbourne trams, where we could have piggy-backed onto an extra 100 there, but a one-off order of nine trams unique to Germany, Poland, and it sounds like, South Australia. I will have more to say about that later but certainly the trams are something that is actually happening. Infrastructure in the state certainly took a boost under the previous Liberal government. It has been continued at a snail's pace by this government. It will continue, though, because we know that the Treasurer has an absolute truckload of money coming into the state.

In His Excellency's speech, there was a mention of the reward that South Australia will reap by Qantas providing direct flights from Auckland to Adelaide. I am delighted about that because I have a daughter, Sahra, who is studying veterinary science in New Zealand at Palmerston North University and I will be glad to take that direct flight to Auckland and fly down to Palmerston or drive. That is one good thing. Whether the Premier will visit his mother in Auckland, I am not sure, but I imagine that will be much more convenient for him as well.

The future of EDS and the venture capital boards in South Australia should be something that this government is pushing along. The Governor's speech talks about the government allocating an extra \$10 million to the venture capital boards. I understand that one of the venture capital organisations that is sponsored by this government gave out \$1.4 million in venture capital and that it took \$1.6 million

to run the office. If that is the case, I would be very dismayed. I hope that this is not true, some of these things that we are hearing about the place, but it is a concern when you hear different stories like this as consistently as we are.

The one thing that this government is trying to avoid is scrutiny, and I was delighted to see that, while they avoided the possibility of a royal commission, they are having the commission of inquiry into sexual abuse of children and young people under the care of the state. In the Senate report, which I have read, there are some absolutely horrendous comments being made by people who were before the Senate committee. One of the things that was pointed out is that there was a concern in South Australia that there had been a destruction of files in the past. We hope that that is going to be uncovered by this commission. I will just read out a few of the comments made to the Senate inquiry that absolutely astounded me. Not all of them are from South Australia, but there are a few, and one that just typifies the types of responses, the types of contributions that were made to the Senate inquiry is this one from a person from New South Wales in this case:

To think that a person could treat another in such a psychologically and physically abusive manner is unthinkable; to treat a child in such manner is simply incomprehensible. Yet it happened.

The Senate report has another section on the attitude of government officials who placed the children in care. One of the care leavers, which was the name given to people who were in care and left care was:

I believe that the people employed by the Child Welfare Department should be made accountable for the emotional physical and mental abuse that they bestowed upon the young people who went through the system. Many of them are still living and their actions should be investigated.

The Sydney Parramatta Girls Industrial School was one that was notorious, and it was mentioned many times in the report. I hope that there is nothing like this in the South Australian report. The Sydney Parramatta Girl's School became renowned for extreme cruelty. The report states:

I'd seen him bash and kick a girl that he had been molesting to try and induce a miscarriage.

Another incident quoted is as follows:

At one meal time, I was served lamb's fry, which made me gag and dry retch. I vomited on the plate. I was then served the same lamb's fry for the next three meals until I ate it. . . It was a prison for little girls.

The highly evocative and emotional language that is consistently repeated in this report is something that is really disturbing, and I urge members of parliament to at least have a look at the submissions and the recommendations. There is language such as 'my sentence', 'concentration camp', 'prison', 'hell hole', 'felt like a convict', 'entombed in institutions', 'inmates', 'incarcerated', 'tortured' and 'nightmare'. These are the terms that were used, and I am sure not just to describe New South Wales institutions, but all over this country. We should be ashamed that these things ever happened, and we need to investigate them thoroughly and completely. A royal commission is what was recommended by the senate inquiry, but a royal commission is what this government did not want to have.

The thing that really hit me about this completely inexplicable and unjustifiable treatment of children—and it happened not just in the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, but as late as the 1980s—concerns what was printed in *The Age* in 1997. *The Age* printed a series of articles on orphanages and babies' homes in Victoria being used for medical

experiments and research, until the 1970s, with new vaccines, that did not work or failed to pass safety tests in animals. That epitomises for me how low some people will go. We need to do something about it, and I hope this government is rigorous in its commission into child abuse. I will read just one more comment out of this report, and it refers to the South Australian Department of Human Services:

The Department of Human Services estimated the cost of child abuse and neglect in 1995 and 1996 to be \$354 million.

That figure is more than the \$318 million South Australia earned in the same period from wine exports. I hope beyond hope, for all those who have suffered, that the government is sincere and that it does not continue with obfuscation and the type of arguments we have been seeing today from the minister. I hope that the government is more genuine and vigorous than that.

I understand that we are about to see legislation concerning the reduction in gaming machines in South Australia introduced in this place this week. The government will re-introduce legislation to cut the number of gaming machines by 3 000, as recommended by the Independent Gaming Authority. Blind Freddy knows that this reduction of these machines will not have any effect at all on Treasury income. We know that, and the government knows that. It is a cynical exercise. I wonder what the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing will do. What will his answer be to the South Australian National Football League concerning his conflict of interest? Here he is, the Minister for Gambling and the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, and his actions as the Minister for Gambling will pull \$2 million out of the footy clubs in South Australia—not the AFL football clubs, although they will be affected, but certainly SANFL football clubs will be deeply affected. I note that one member opposite, the member for Napier, is voicing his concern about the reduction in poker machines. The Central Districts Football Club and the Salisbury North Football Club were rated amongst the highest earners in gaming machines, but there again that money is going back into the community, and so it should. I support the member for Napier in his efforts in relation to this matter, and I know many of my colleagues on this side will do the same.

On page 19 of His Excellency's speech, it states:

My government will consider new measures for Aboriginal consultation, engagement and representation.

If the Premier's reaction to a question last Thursday is any indication of his degree of engagement, I am absolutely staggered. As a member of the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee, I can say that the committee will be asking many questions on what this government is really going to do. There are many more questions to be asked. There is a lot of history here. The Premier was the minister for Aboriginal affairs back in the early 1990s, and he has a lot to answer for. All governments have a lot to answer for, but this Premier should not put himself on a high horse.

This Premier is one who has used the art of media spin to its nth degree. I have just obtained a book (and I suggest that the Premier reads this book) entitled *What is the media doing to politics?* It is about the British system and the Blair-Kelly fiasco over there in England. The Premier will learn very quickly that this tame media will turn. They will turn, and they will bury him because they will find out what he is saying and doing is just a lot of spin. We have had a lot of spin from this government, and it is getting out of control.

We came into this session of parliament with this speech, where we profess to be doing good things for the state. With the truck load of money the government has, it should be able to do many things. However, we have broken promises. We have the highest taxing government in the history of South Australia. The federal Leader of the Opposition goes on about how the federal government is a high taxing government. Well, that pales into insignificance compared to what this government has been doing. I refer to the *Government Gazette* of 26 August 2004 and the quarterly figures put out by the Treasurer. In the nine months ended 31 March 2004, the land tax collected by this state government was 98 per cent of what the whole year was going to be. So, in nine months the government collected 98 per cent, which is almost 100 per cent. The government collected 99.9 per cent of the stamp duty in nine months that it had budgeted for in 12 months.

In relation to fees and charges, in that nine months to 31 March 2004, the government collected 111 per cent in nine months. What will the government collect in 12 months? Let us not forget what Mr Beattie said in Brisbane last week about the GST revenue, the windfall revenue this government has received. Mr Beattie said that it is the people's money and they should get it back. This state is getting an extra \$244 million extra in GST in the 2004-05 budget. That is on top of the \$3 billion plus that it is already getting. It is getting an extra \$244 million in GST. That should be spent on the people of South Australia in a judicious way, not squirreled away for the May 2005 budget and then a mini-budget in 2006 that will be loaded up for a big spending spree for the 2006 election.

This government is pulling in over \$3 million each and every day in property taxes. It will not do anything about council rates, because it is pulling in so much every day in property taxes. Why would you go out and belt the councils when you are doing things that are just as bad yourself? It is pulling in over \$1 million each and every day in gambling taxes, and the reduction in poker machine numbers will have no effect on that. It is pulling in each and every day over \$1 million in stamp duties, and that will go up. We saw already in nine months to 31 March 2004 that it has collected 99.9 per cent of the stamp duty it budgeted for in one year.

This is the highest taxing government in the history of South Australia. This government should be ashamed of the spin that it is putting on the fact that it is trying to get a AAA rating. We know who lost the AAA rating; we know why and we know exactly what this government is trying to do. It is trying to get back some credibility that it so disastrously lost through the State Bank affair.

The ministers opposite come in here and give answers of sorts and, unfortunately, one or two just have not been pulling their weight and have been dragging the chain. Evidence of that is in the Motor Trades Association of South Australia annual report 2003-04 and the Commercial Vehicles Association of South Australia report. The Motor Trades Association annual report states:

Meetings with Transport SA.

South Australia has a new Minister for Transport (Trish White) following a ministerial reshuffle and, from all the reports, she has a more positive can/will-do attitude to that of the previous minister to the extent that TSA staff are flat out catching up on a backlog of work and cannot meet with industry groups before July.

Certainly, I understand that minister White is doing a lot of catch-up, and a lot of questions will be asked, because certainly there will be huge amounts of catch-up. However,

if you criticise this government, what happens? Ask Frances Nelson. Shoot the messenger every time! This government does not want to be accountable; it does not want to answer questions; and the other thing it does not want is to consult. If we look at the Brownhill Creek-Keswick Creek flood plan amendment report, who was consulted? A few bits of paper were put out, but there was no real opportunity to consult. It was an interim plan which was put into action straight away, and home owners have been slugged left, right and centre from day one. There was no consultation. Some home owners are paying \$50 000 or \$60 000 to have renovations and engineering work carried out on their homes for what was once a complying development but is now a non-complying development. Even if you want to put up a fence it is a non-complying development. This government needs to do what it said it would do—be open, honest and accountable.

This government has forgotten its roots and it has forgotten the battlers. It just does not care any more about the battlers. It is all about squirreling away the money and stuffing those hollow logs full of money so that it can stay in government. It bought its way into government and will buy its way into the next term if it can. However, I know the opposition will work exceptionally hard to expose this government for what it is—much more spin than substance.

I hold the portfolio areas for which I have been given the privilege of responsibility in this place (local government, sport and recreation, consumer affairs and volunteers) with great delight and humility. The issue of local government council rates is very topical at the moment on talk-back radio and in the media. Local government is being put under the gun by this government and, as I said before, the government will do nothing to help local government—not when it can reap in \$3 million a day in property taxes. Why would it? It is pulling in \$3 million every day in property taxes, so the councils have to wear the flak for being the ogres because they, unfortunately, have to deliver their rates as one bill each and every year. I have done a survey of the councils and not one council has come to my notice which has not dropped the rate in the dollar. They are being very responsible in their attitude. I have used Charles Sturt Council's pain index as an example, but it is not just Charles Sturt council that does this: it is councils from the south-east to the north of the state, and to the east and the west. Local government is doing a great job, and to shoot the messenger all the time is the wrong thing to do.

The cost shifting that has been happening from government to government in budgeting is very concerning to me. It was interesting to read in the Hawker report about cost shifting. Mayor Zappia of Salisbury Council was complaining that cost shifting from the state government to local government was costing his council \$40 000 a year just to replace and provide new bus shelters. The cost for EPA compliance alone in one council is \$2.2 million.

The minister said in a ministerial statement not long ago that, as we know, historically flood mitigation costs were a local issue. They are now a state issue, particularly in the metropolitan area. We see this at the Patawalonga, out at Campbelltown, at Salisbury and Port Adelaide and up at Verdun. But the state government needs to assist local government. It is not possible for local government to provide the infrastructure for flood mitigation necessary in the event of a one in 100-year rain event. There are many reasons for that such as urban infill and the increased density of popula-

tion, and these factors should be of concern to all of us, particularly members in the western suburbs.

I notice that the amalgamation of councils came up in the local paper the other day. I am asking councils to speak to me, as the shadow minister for local government, about the efficiencies that have been achieved by amalgamations in local government. Certainly there has been evidence in many areas of amalgamations providing significant economies of scale.

The portfolio of sport and recreation should be very topical, not just because of our most outstanding success at the Olympic Games, but in South Australia we will have the Australian Masters Games next year, the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne in 2006, and the World Police and Fire Games (the third largest sporting event in the world) in Adelaide 2007. There are 60 events in the World Police and Fire Games, but on the web site there is only one page; it then shunts you off to a couple of other areas which do not give much information about what will happen in 2007.

In relation to the facilities, I am really concerned that we will be left behind. By the time next year's budget is announced by the Treasurer, with the extra \$244 million in GST, the extra \$3 million from property taxes, the booming income and truck loads of money, the Treasurer will not have time to spend the money before 2007. In the electorate of Lee—the electorate of the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing—the SASI rowing facilities do not have lane markers. I was there for the National Youth Rowing Championships, which will be held here next year, and teams from New Zealand were there (so I suppose it was international) and they were shocked. There were no lane markers on the rowing course.

In relation to The Pines Stadium, I understand the roof has been leaking for many months yet nothing has been done. There has been no action. People have been saying, 'We can fix it. We know how to fix it. We just need the minister to sign off.' But it has not happened. The state government spent almost \$600 000 to move the state rifle range to Lower Light. The problem is that if it rains people cannot get to it because the road is muddy and they get bogged. They cannot get out there. For the sake of a few extra dollars—we know where the dollars are and where they are coming from—we could upgrade these facilities. In relation to ice sports we have heard absolutely nothing. It is the sounds of silence on the government benches about the future of ice sports in South Australia. There was a rumour about a new arena being built at Mawson Lakes. I have not heard any more about that. I just hope that the future of Snowdome Adelaide has been secured, at least for 2007.

I note the new Minister for Consumer Affairs was in the house, although she has now left. I have raised the issue of the tragic death of Mr Dean Eustice, one of my constituents. I knew Mr Eustice quite well. I doorknocked his home on several occasions and was invited in. He telephoned me on a couple of occasions. I got to know Dean, who was a lovely bloke. He was never going to do what he was accused of doing. I understand this fellow is still employed by Westfield Marion. I think that is reprehensible. If one reads the Coroner's report, that bloke could not lie straight in bed. He should be charged because Mr Eustice would never have been found guilty of what this fellow took upon himself. He assumed Mr Eustice could have been a paedophile. How outrageous! He accused him of stealing a purse, after he had offered to give his name and address to the people at Marion. The security industry in this state needs a shake-up. We have

seen little from this government other than rhetoric. The new licensing provisions are not doing much at all. We need the government to come down hard and to do something about the industry; to do what it said it would do, that is, be tough on law and order. What a joke that has been!

The other day I was telephoned by a constituent. They said they could not believe their eyes. They were at Big W and they saw a tee-shirt with a picture of two little boys holding aerosol spray cans, with a saying underneath, 'Born to spray'. I think that was totally irresponsible. It was promoting graffiti. It was portraying graffiti in a positive light. Big W is a responsible corporate citizen. I telephoned the Sydney office and the tee-shirts were withdrawn almost immediately. The last thing we need in this state is to encourage graffiti. Why? Because the government has cut anti-graffiti funding. Members should just ask councils how much it is costing them for private security guards and graffiti removal. It is costing them a lot of money.

The government has been fairly open and honest—and been quite good—about volunteers. I was disappointed when looking at the web site for the World Police and Fire Games that the MFS web site was there, the South Australian Ambulance Service web site was there, but the SES and certainly the CFS web sites were not there. I think the volunteers in the CFS and SES need to be given equal space with their full-time colleagues. We know what a good job all the volunteers do, and I have said before how much I value their contribution during incidents of flooding or near flooding at the Patawalonga. I know the Premier was a bit miffed when I said that his intrusion during the last flood was probably more disruptive than constructive. The Premier is no orphan in supporting volunteers: we all support volunteers. As a registered CFS member, the Premier should know about the Australian Incident Management System. He should know about the chain of command and the risk of a personality with a profile such as his disrupting the chain of command at a critical moment. While I encourage the Premier, who is a registered CFS member, to keep supporting the SES in the way which he does, he should not try to shoot the messenger.

In the electorate of Morphett, which I am so privileged to represent, life is pretty good. While there are mixed feelings about Magic Mountain, it has gone. I have a series of photographs which I am happy to show to members. I do have some pieces of Magic Mountain which I will have mounted for certain members in this place in order that they may remember those events. Some people called it 'tragic mountain'. I look forward to the renovations at Glenelg. This morning I was in the temporary headquarters of the Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club. That building in Moseley Square is being used for pre-poll voting. I noticed that, in true surf tradition, one of the first things that has been set up is a bar. Good luck to them! I enjoy having a beer with them on the few occasions I visit them. As their patron, I give the volunteers great support. I am pleased, also, that the government is supporting them. There is not as much funding through the emergency services levy as we would like, but it is credit where credit is due.

I was lucky enough yesterday to take part in the City-Bay Fun Run, although I am a bit stiff and sore today. I did not see the Premier but I assume that he was on his way down to the Bay. The 15 000 people who ended up down at the Bay is a small reflection of what the Bay means to South Australia. My seat of Morphett is not just the Bay (although I talk about it a lot and that is because it is an icon for South Australia) and it extends as far as Warradale, with all its

beautiful people. The Warradale Primary School hosts students from all around the state in its boarding facilities, so students from as far away as Ceduna on the West Coast can come to stay in Adelaide. The Paringa Park Primary School has been hard done by in the past, but the government allocated \$2.5 million in the last budget for that school, and I am very pleased about that. I am very fortunate to represent the people of Morphett in this place. I only have one regret and that is that I am in opposition.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I would like to comment in reply to the Governor's speech on some of the initiatives that are taking place in the seat of Adelaide, particularly the positive measures that are affecting both education and the environment across my constituency. I will also comment on some more worrying elements that are occurring in relation to planning and heritage conservation matters.

It is worth saying that Adelaide has been one of the major beneficiaries of the Green Adelaide initiative by the Premier, which implements changes across the whole of metropolitan Adelaide but most particularly has an impact on our built-up urban areas and the city of Adelaide itself. One of those initiatives was the One Million Trees initiative which originally aimed to plant one million trees, but the goals were reached so rapidly—and I joined the Premier and 25 students from the Gilles Street Primary School at the 500 000th tree planting in the West Parklands—that we have subsequently regauged our targets and increased the State Strategic Plan, suggesting that we will plant, as a goal, three million trees by the year 2014. The one million trees that were originally planned across Adelaide from Gawler to Willunga and the coast to the Adelaide Hills are part of the Urban Forests Million Trees program, with some 1 000 hectares of land being planted with native varieties to create a network of urban forests that will help remove 300 000 tonnes of greenhouse gas from the atmosphere, improve water and air quality and provide a habitat for indigenous plants and animals.

Particularly within the inner city areas, these initiatives have been supported by schools and many schools have taken up the challenge. Gilles Street Primary School, as principal Max Green says, is always keen to be in touch with nature and the One Million Trees program has provided just one example of the way children can take a role in developing sustainability in an urban area. Adelaide has taken its environmental responsibilities seriously and, as part of the program of planting around the parklands, there is also some input in the state government's new initiative towards waterproofing Adelaide. In addition, schools in this constituency are getting solar power, and that solar powering system will shortly be unveiled, also in Sturt Street Primary School.

As an individual who has taken up the opportunity of solar powering my house, I can only say what a profound impact it has on bills and the sustainability of a single house and, if that initiative is expanded along North Terrace to create the North Terrace power station, as the Premier has planned, it will make a significant impact on our greenhouse gas emissions. Just speaking for myself, my last pre-photovoltaic bill was \$780 and my first post photovoltaic bill was \$34, followed by a \$38 bill, so the impact on the cost of running a home has been quite significant for me personally.

I would also say that within the city, North Adelaide, Prospect and Walkerville there has been a keen take-up of another of the Premier's initiatives, the Premier's Reading

Challenge. In the first year of the reading challenge we came very close to reaching our entire target for some years ahead. Approximately 98 000 students from government and non-government schools, as well as those in home schooling programs, participated in this year's challenge, so already 70 per cent of all schools in South Australia have been involved, which is a testament to the commitment of South Australian educators, parents and children to the pleasure and enjoyment of reading and inevitably to improving outcomes in literacy throughout the state. Students who have been successful in completing the challenge will receive their certificates in November and those schools that have achieved a high level of involvement will also be invited to a special reception hosted by the Premier in late November.

There have been very positive results in the success of the challenge emerging from schools, with reports that the reading challenge is encouraging students to read more widely and is having a real impact on literacy levels across the state. The additional funding that the state government gave to schools to improve the range of books within their school libraries has also resulted in increased reading and more borrowing from school libraries and a real thirst for literacy in young South Australians. I would particularly like to mention that in my own electorate, Blackfriars Priory School has 213 participants and—

Mr Snelling: A good school.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Blackfriars is indeed a very good school. I had the pleasure of taking part in a quiz night only two Fridays ago and I have to comment on the good manners and courtesy shown to me by all the students, the high level of organisation and the great success of the night. I trust that the cricket tour will be well funded, and I wish the young men well. Gilles Street Primary School, which as I have said was involved in a significant tree planting activity a few weeks ago, also has 353 members of the reading scheme; the Hospital Schooling Service, which is based in the Women's and Children's Hospital, has 20; Prospect Primary School, 320; the Rosary School, 389; St Dominic's Priory College, 358; St Monica's Parish School, 130; and our newest school in the city, Sturt Street Community School, has 20 people engaged in this program. Walkerville Primary School has 445 participants; Wilderness School, 147; Adelaide High School, 400; St Aloysius College, 525; and St Marys College, 200 participants. This level of enthusiasm augurs well for the future of education in the state.

However, the area of some concern that I would like to raise relates to some of the planning issues in the City of Adelaide. Those who have followed recent activities in that area will perhaps know that a plan amendment report has been proposed, which has produced some consternation in the community. That is because there have been very substantial changes to the system of planning proposed in that this plan allegedly seeks to simplify and encourage development. However, the format is complex and, rather than enabling, generally tends to make it difficult for those involved in planning to interpret the measures involved. In fact, several substantive changes within the PAR are completely new to the City of Adelaide and are too complex for those involved in development to appreciate.

In drafting the document, there was apparently a desire to clarify the definitions and anomalies within the plan. Of particular interest, there was a view that non-complying developments should not be handled in a way that said only those forms of development that are not desired under any

circumstances should be included as non-complying, and that non-complying developments should be specifically nominated. But, in doing so, there have been some extraordinary changes to what types of development are recognised or encouraged within the City of Adelaide. What has happened is that the new planning regulations have no index and no definitions but have extensive changes, even in residential areas where there are uses such as backpacker hostels, passenger terminals, light industry, open lot car parks and licensed premises. Since there is no explanation of the rationale for these changes, or even proper definitions for them within the document—nor has there been any consultation with residents on these issues—there will inevitably be a degree of surprise when some of these extraordinary uses become approved in residential areas.

It is also interesting that, whilst there has been some clarification of some of the definitions—such as the precise heights of buildings being measured to ensure that the height of a building is understood by both developers and planners—some extraordinary areas of confusion have been introduced into the organisation of the planning system. In particular, there is the introduction of the performance-based policies. In effect, this will give greater flexibility to planning laws, but there is a tendency away from defined terms and the capacity to give more flexibility, which will lead to a non-prescriptive and, therefore, difficult to interpret system of planning. One area that is particularly worrying is that there has been a major increase in building heights across the whole of the city. The justification for this has been that the Adelaide City Council wishes to increase the number of residents within the square mile and North Adelaide. That being so, it will be interesting to work out how these measures were calculated, in total disregard for the heritage conservation plans that are also moving in parallel, but different, universes.

Within this draft PAR, at a time when there is a development boom, there has been an extraordinary increase in the building height limits to between four and seven storeys up to 10 storeys in some areas, to allow an increased bulk and, therefore, an increase in the city's residential and employment population over the next 20 years. The other issue that is unusual is that there are now minimum height limits, so that where a two-storey or single-storey heritage building might exist, there are now limitations on height adjacent and in the same streets so that, in fact, the fine grain and rather eclectic mix of architectural types within the city and residential zones will be lost.

Particularly damaging in the city is the loss of the non-complying triggers for development that exceed stated maximum heights. Whilst these have been reintroduced in the residential North Adelaide zone and the residential southern city square area, they have been replaced only with an advisory principle recommending maximum heights for each policy area. The problem with this is that, in the absence of plot ratio and dwelling unit factors, in the middle of a building boom and with higher limits, and in the absence of any heritage conservation study that has been up to date and incorporated into the PAR, the building heights have been increased prior to any heritage study being performed and incorporated. The major problem with this is that, in the midst of a building boom, if your only rationale for a plan is to increase the population of the city, you will inevitably have major demolition of unprotected sites. Indeed, the Adelaide City Council has taken the unprecedented position of carrying out a heritage conservation study and releasing it to the public

without ministerial interim protection and, indeed, asking that that interim protection should not be given by way of avoiding the request. Subsequently, those buildings are likely to be lost before the heritage conservation zones are put into place.

In fact, one of the problems with the current proposal is that the heights are significantly increased and will encourage demolition before the heritage work is completed. For instance, with respect to the heritage areas of the southern city, it is true that in Hutt Street there will be a height limit of 28 metres (which is eight storeys) and, in other areas, four storeys. In King William Street south it will be 16 stories, and around the main streets of O'Connell Street, Melbourne Street, Hutt Street, Gouger Street and King William Street there will, in fact, be no height limits, because there are no non-complying triggers. This will significantly impact on the residents who live around these main streets, who previously had some protection because there were maximum height limits—and, indeed, these height limits were recognised by a non-complying trigger.

So, in terms of the City of Adelaide, there are bleak times ahead. Indeed, there has not even been a completed survey in South Adelaide. The northern Adelaide survey has been released without interim protection, and there has been no survey to date of the parklands. You might argue that the parklands are adequately protected and, if the planning system did in fact work, all development in the parklands would be considered non-complying. But experience teaches us that very often governments see that there are advantages in having developments in the parklands, and the non-complying status can be overruled by a major project decision. Fortunately, this government has a policy of protection of the parklands and, thanks to minister Hill's work on parklands preservation and a soon-to-be introduced policy, there will be no major development within the parklands. So for the moment they are, I believe, protected.

The other area of heritage conservation that needs to be addressed is on a systemic level throughout many councils in the metropolitan area, where there is a view that heritage conservation should be a voluntary process. This belief that any law should be voluntarily adhered to has brought about the destruction of Fernilee Lodge, Edgecliff in North Adelaide and a whole swathe of heritage buildings throughout the metropolitan area because many councils lack leadership and the capacity to make decisions and, therefore, try to avoid heritage listing of buildings except where the owner voluntarily requests that listing occur. The problem with this premise is, of course, that where a property is owned by a developer the best interests of the community may not always be held as part of their development strategy and, therefore, the buildings will be destroyed. Indeed, it is perhaps as foolish as asking someone to voluntarily adhere to speed limits or voluntarily adhere to any major criminal legislation because inevitably, where there is personal gain to be had, people may not be as generous with their view of what is for the community good.

Perhaps the issue is even more vexed when the developer and the assembler of land parcels happens to be a local council. It is not unknown around metropolitan areas for local councils to assemble land parcels with the view that there will be a development opportunity on that site. It is particularly difficult and contentious when that development parcel includes heritage buildings which are of significance to the community and which are of heritage significance by any observation in terms of history and culture, and when those

buildings are not listed because the council would view that site as being one where they could make a better economic gain.

I would, again, welcome minister Hill's work in his Sustainability Bill and his work with heritage directions because it will be a great step forward to have policy that will require local government to not only carry out a heritage survey but also protect buildings until those listings can be properly assessed and formally worked upon.

Those are the issues about which I have concerns, but it is perhaps worth ending on a positive note—and that positive note has to be about one of my favourite events in the calendar. I am, perhaps, not alone when I suggest that the best week of the year is Royal Show week. Whilst strictly speaking this is not in my electorate, everyone parks in the parklands before going and many South Australians specifically come to Adelaide for show week and bring the country to the city. In fact, it is interesting that per capita we have the largest turnout in Australia. Whilst the Sydney Royal Show may have a larger number of attendees, only 12 per cent of Greater Sydney's population go whereas 40 per cent of our state's population come to the Royal Show. This event has, in fact, been a tourism award winner. It has an economic impact of \$60 million on the city; it has an average of 620 000 visitors annually; and 6 000 people find employment, with 160 part-time staff being employed by the society in the lead up to and during the Royal Adelaide Show. It is also worth remembering that the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society of South Australia was established in 1839. It is the second oldest organisation in South Australia, with the oldest being the police force, which was established in 1838. So, once again, I would say that this is a positive note on which to end for a committed show girl.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): I rise to acknowledge the excellent work undertaken by Governor Marjorie Jackson-Nelson as her commitment to this state follows in the vein of our previous governors in that they put the state first. They get around to an incredible range of venues and invitations—the schedule that they are able to keep up just amazes me—and I feel that that needs to be recognised and they need to be thanked. So, to our current Governor I say thank you for the work you do for the state. It is certainly a very heavy workload and the work that you do is, I am sure, recognised by all in the state. The very friendly attitude that our Governor has when meeting people and her ability to put them at ease is excellent, as I have noted from the times I have met with her and observed her moving around the community and at various functions. I also thank the Deputy Governor, Bruno Krumins, for his delivery of the Governor's speech in the Legislative Council. I know that as Deputy Governor he fills in for the Governor when she is away or otherwise cannot make certain invitations, and we thank him for the work he does as well.

I move on to what the Governor's speech addressed and the direction that this government has for the state over the next 12 months. I find it interesting to see that, while some of the comments in this speech are very optimistic, the reality is that we are going in a different direction. I point out the comments regarding export income, with the government aiming to reach \$25 billion worth of export income by 2013. We are currently going backwards. When the previous government left office in 2002, exports were sitting at around \$9 billion, and they are now down to \$7.6 billion. The government is obviously not putting enough work into this

area to continue to hang this figure out there of \$25 billion a year by 2013. While we all wish that it can be achieved, because that would be excellent for the economy of South Australia, the government has to put some action where its mouth is, and that is to help companies by assisting in trade missions overseas, as the honourable Rob Kerin did when he was minister for primary industries, by taking them over to various trade fairs and ensuring that South Australia is well represented there and able to get those products that we produce for export in front of overseas buyers and governments so that there is a high chance of achieving that \$25 billion. But, as long as this government does not put the work in that area, I would say that the chances of reaching that by 2013 are Buckley's.

In the second part I see here the plan for accelerating exploration:

The \$15 million plan for accelerating exploration is helping to open up our vast mineral and petroleum resources.

That is all well and good except that, from my memory—and I cannot remember the figure—royalties went up in this year's budget, so that the exploration companies and the mining companies of this state are actually paying for the \$15 million worth of accelerating exploration. It is not coming out of government coffers—it is a matter of giving with one hand and taking away with the other. So, I would not imagine that they would be terribly happy about that at all. If you want to ensure the economic profitability of those companies and then, because of that, they will invest in more exploration, raising royalties is not the way to do it.

I go on, where the government talks about a new food centre 'in conjunction with regional development boards and food industry groups'. I might just remind the government that the previous government set up the state food plan, and that was working with a range of horticulturalists, agricultural people, companies who were exporting and the fishing industry to promote South Australia and to promote the clean, green food image from South Australia as one which is a benefit to buyers in terms of importing goods from South Australia. This is another re-announcement, so to speak, or a continuation of the plan that was already in force. It is nothing new. I just hope that they are going to do something, because the fact is that not a great deal is being done in this area, and the state food plan that the previous government had has been allowed to lapse, and obviously now we are coming out with a new beaut food centre. I hope that a bit of action is taken rather than letting it drift.

I see a comment in here about the state's finances being on a sound footing, '... ensuring that the government's higher levels of spending on health, education, community safety, and the environment are sustainable'. Well, if the previous government had not undertaken the difficult decisions that we did, this government would not be in the position that it is in now. There were some extremely difficult decisions taken, particularly in terms of selling our power facilities. You had, on one hand, over \$9 billion worth of debt and the amount of interest that was having to be paid to support that debt, and on the other hand a choice of selling the power facilities and introducing competition in the market. All of us, I am sure, would say that it has not worked out exactly as we would have wished, but the point is that this government is \$5.5 billion better off and having to pay out far less interest than whatever the previous government had to pay out, because the previous government reduced the debt. As a result of that, this state is far better off and, as a result

of that, there is far less interest to be paid by this government, and that places it in a far better position. The market for electricity has not turned out the way that we would have wished, and whether it could have been done better I am not sure, but certainly we would have liked to see a lot more competition come into this market.

I noticed that one good program is the Every Chance for Every Child program, where every family with a new baby receives a visit by a nurse in the family's home, and I think that that is an excellent idea. I cannot remember what CAFHS is called now, but I have had discussions with the nurses who visit mothers in their home, or handle what used to be that mothers and babies group—

Mrs Redmond: The baby health clinics.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Yes, the baby health clinics. Thank you, member for Heysen. The nurses who handle those clinics are just fantastic in the work that they do and also the information that they pass on to new mothers. I know that when my wife had our first child, Alexander, the information that she received from there was excellent, and the check-ups that were provided to make sure that you were on track and that the child was healthy were excellent. So, being able to go into the home and see the conditions in the home and look at, perhaps, where the baby is sleeping, and a range of things like that, is an excellent program, and I know is welcomed by those nurses.

Another comment in the Governor's speech, on page 11, states:

My government believes that the social inclusion initiative has achieved good results in dealing with homelessness, drugs summit recommendations and school retention rates.

Well, as yet I have not seen any shift in school retention rates. What is more, I have seen a report by a Victorian professor, who was commenting on school retention rates across the nation, and he noted the high level in South Australia of part-time year 12 students. The report also identified that, when those students are included in the school retention rates, because the ABS does not include them with the full-time students, South Australia's retention rate is above the national average. That is what the previous government and I as the then minister for education said all the time when we were in government. However, the opposition of the day (the now government) decided that that was not a very good story for them, so they conveniently decided to ignore that point. However, the fact is that, because students in this state can undertake year 12 over two years, we end up with a lot more young students carrying on a part-time job at the same time as they undertake their year 12 studies. Sometimes, they take that part-time job because their family is not in a good financial position so they need to earn some income, or because they wish to spread their studies over two years and earn some money whilst undertaking their studies.

So, it was very convenient for the government to overlook that fact when it was in opposition. However, it was an interesting comment from the Victorian academic, when looking at national retention rates, stating the obvious, which we stated all the time when we were in government: that the retention rate in South Australia is far better than is purported. The fact is that the 1990 figure is the figure that is always cranked out by Premier Rann. The fact is that in 1990 youth unemployment was at 45 per cent because of the previous government and the Keating government nationally. Because of the high unemployment, you could only undertake your year 12 studies over one year, not two years, so kids stayed at school because there was no hope of them getting a job

outside of school. As a result, higher numbers of students stayed at school. So, I would not say there has been misleading reporting, but there is certainly inaccurate reporting in the Governor's speech on that issue.

I notice further on in the speech that the government talked about its 250 school solar power program. It is intended that 80 additional schools will become solar powered this financial year. I would like to know what has happened to the \$1 million environmental fund that the previous government put into place. This fund was set up for schools to make bids into that fund for environmental matters within their schools, and it was used by a lot of schools for automatic watering systems, rather than sprinklers, so that they could water at night, or for other environmental matters that would save them money or help the environment of their school. That \$1 million has obviously been pulled and is now being put into the solar power program. However, I know that the schools valued that environmental fund and the ability to bid for that \$1 million because of the projects they were able to get up. As I have said, that is another program that has disappeared out of education in this government's program.

I turn now to a few other matters away from the Governor's speech. It is interesting to observe this government in action, because there is a lot of talk but not much action. I remember when Premier Rann came out and said that they were going to break down the fortresses of the bikies—they would bring in the bulldozers and knock down these walls where these fortresses existed. Well, I have not seen one of them disappear as yet, and I am quite sure that we will not. It makes great press in terms of people thinking that something is going to be done, but the fact is that nothing does get done. I think the member for MacKillop, in his Address in Reply speech, indicated that this was the 'gunna' government, and I think he is very right: they're 'gunna' do a lot but never quite get around to it. They make a lot of announcements about what they are going to do but nothing much happens. That contrasts with the performance of the current federal government where the decisions that have been taken in many cases are very hard decisions, but they have actually made decisions and they have done something. Whether people think the decisions have been right or wrong is another issue. However, the fact is that things have happened, and the federal government has made changes.

There are a number of areas where promises were given when this government came to office, such as that the government would be tough on crime, and I have seen that some levels of imprisonment have been increased. However, as I think I have said in this place previously, if you want you can increase every penalty up to life imprisonment, but unless the judiciary hands out those sentences nothing will change. The judiciary will look at what was the last worst case, and then make a decision on the level of penalty they hand out to the criminal, based on that last worst case, and compare the current case with the last case. So, you will not see a defendant receive the maximum penalty unless they were going to get the maximum penalty, anyway; for instance, for murder or something like that. Again, there is a lot of talk, but not a great deal is going to change. The fact is that, if you were going to ensure that more people ended up in prison for their crimes, you would need to build another prison because our current prisons are full, and I do not see any plans around the place for that to happen.

If we look at employment, South Australia is going against the trend. The latest figures show that there is a downturn in full-time retail employment in South Australia, yet I remem-

ber the headlines when the extension of shopping hours was delivered. I think we were supposed to be producing an extra 15 000 jobs in retail. We all knew—on this side of the house, anyway—that there is only a certain amount of money to be spent. If you talked to shop assistants at that time they would have told you that, by 6 o'clock at night, particularly in Rundle Mall, everybody has gone home. If there is such a demand for these shopping hours, why are the shops not open in Rundle Mall now until 9 o'clock every night? The fact is that there is not the demand. The people are not there with the money to spend. This is what we were saying would happen, but it all fell on deaf ears. So, not much has changed. However, what has changed is that this state, because of the loss of full-time jobs, the high taxing of this government and the revenue that has been hauled in from property taxes which have increased over and above the CPI charges (whether it be vehicle registration or anything else) is seeing a slowing down of the economy, and that is to the detriment of South Australia.

Of course, as I was just talking about in regard to taxes, we have had a number of broken promises. The government promised no new taxes and no higher-than-inflation charges. Well, hello! You only have to look at what has been happening—

Mr Meier interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Yes. The truth is that it is very different to what was said before. It is great to say one thing leading up to an election and another thing when you get into government. One has to have a wry smile on one's face, and I am sure that people in the constituency are not hoodwinked by this sort of action. We were told there would be lower power costs and that Labor would reduce the cost of power—'Hand on our chest; we will do it.' Well, we have not seen that yet, either. We were told there would be no expansion of the ministry during this time, yet this government has found another couple of million dollars to put in a fifteenth minister. It can find money for that but not to support disabled children who have left school.

Mr Williams: Disgraceful!

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I agree with the member for MacKillop that it is absolutely disgraceful. Of course, in the first six months of this parliament we saw a complete slowdown and stop of any capital works expenditure in that it was all 'under review'. I have lost track of the number of reviews that this government is conducting. Every time someone comes up with an idea it seems that there will be a review on it, and that just means that a decision is put further out into the future and, in some cases, a decision will never be made. It sounds like the government is doing something but it is actually doing nothing. Of course, all those capital works were put on hold.

I remember the member for Taylor, when she was shadow education minister, criticising the previous government about the underspend on capital works in education alone. Let me tell members that it pales into insignificance in terms of the underspend of this government on capital works. It seems that it solves its problems in terms of budget and ensures that it ends up with surpluses being stacked away by slowing down capital works rather than getting on with it.

I was interested to hear the Treasurer's comment the other day that what is not spent in the budget will not be carried over. There are many times when a project does not go according to schedule and funds are not spent within the allocated 12 month period, and there is nothing untoward about that; it is just a fact of life. Reallocating funds in the

following year is one way of cutting the budget—or building it up so that it looks better the following year than it really is. You take those funds and put them back into the next budget because, obviously, the project will not stop, but that makes it look like there is increased spending in this budget. It is really the funds from the year before being taken away and put into the following budget.

Much has been said by this government about new police stations. There were supposed to be new police stations at Mount Barker, Gawler and one other place.

Mr Williams: Golden Grove.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Golden Grove, that is the third one, and it was going to be a public-private partnership. Has anybody heard anything about this? In my discussions with police nothing is happening. I remember asking a question of the Minister for Police (I think earlier this year or late last year, one of the two: I cannot remember) about the progress of the public-private partnership regarding the police station in Gawler. I asked whether the government would fund a new police station in Gawler out of its public works funding if the public-private partnership did not go ahead, and the Minister for Police at that stage told me everything was on schedule and rolling on very well and he expected there would be a positive outcome from the PPP. Nobody has seen anything and I imagine that, miraculously, somewhere around the time of next year's budget (excuse me for being cynical!) there might be an announcement.

If we look at industrial relations, the Fair Work Bill that is currently out for consultation in the community would be one of the most draconian bills that I have ever seen, and I can tell members that the business people in my area are livid about it. The sorts of impositions that would apply to their business and the ability for people to walk into their business and demand records is nothing short of outrageous. Of course, it is still out for consultation. It has been out for consultation for quite some time. I am waiting to see whether the government introduces the bill or whether the bill dies a natural death and does not get into this place. If it does ever get into this place, small business in the community will be lobbying opposition members, as they have already lobbied us, to oppose this bill in its entirety—and I intend to do so.

I am pleased that the government is supporting the Gawler River flood retention dam. I call on the government to continue to support this program. As a result of the latest costings on this plan, it will require increased input from the federal government, as well as local and state governments. The dam is very much required in the area. People would remember the 1992 floods and the \$10 million worth of damage that occurred in the lower reaches of the Gawler River. A report was done by premier Arnold at the time on that flooding. Any time after that date governments of whatever persuasion have been aware of the risks that apply to that area because of the North Para River and South Para River and the possibility of flooding. Should another serious flood occur in that area, we have had legal opinion that the government would be liable for costs of damage that arise from the flood. I encourage the government to continue to work. I will do all I can to ensure that whatever federal government—whether it be Labor or Liberal after the federal election on 9 October—and the federal minister continue to support that flood retention dam, because it is sorely needed within the area.

I was interested to read a transcript of what the Minister for Education and Children's Services said on radio the other day. She was talking about local management of schools. Of

course, the previous Liberal government brought in local government management of schools under the guise of Partnerships 21. We received great criticism from the union and the opposition at that time; I think from just about everyone. I remember editorials being written by the Editor of *The Advertiser* criticising it and saying that it was the wrong move for the government to make. Well, it is interesting to note that, when the minister has gone out to consult with the community on the direction of education, the message to the minister has been very strongly to retain local management in schools. I do not think anyone will dare take that away, now that it has been given to our schools, but I do note that a lot of flexibility has been taken out by the government. Schools have money taken out of their budget and they are now told what repairs and maintenance are to be done on their school, rather than the school having a choice as to what it considers to be the most important project.

I know that loss of flexibility is very frustrating for schools. Many schools are afraid to criticise the government because they fear retribution may well come from this government in relation to that issue, but I know many schools are frustrated. I have looked at the budget of Gawler High School for information communication technology this year, and I noted that it has been reduced by \$45 000. In many cases, there is not more money going into schools. In many cases there is less money going into schools. I am sure that when a Liberal government is returned to power in this state it will give those schools back flexibility to operate as a locally managed school, not just a quasi local management. I also noted that \$4 million was being spent by this government on training and nine additional financial officers.

The transcript of the minister's interview on radio made it sound as though the previous government did not put any money into training SSOs in order to ensure they understood the financial package and how to manage it. Well, I can tell you that we did. Well over \$1 million was put into just that when we came into Partnerships 21. It was recognised that training would be required. On many occasions when I visited schools people were having trouble, so we ended up with someone from the financial area of the department going out to work side by side with them to ensure they did understand the system and were brought up to speed on it. A review is needed of any system. It is good to do that because one can always improve on the model. Any government that does not do that is not being responsible, because there are always better ways to do things.

One other area that is concerning people in my electorate is the splitting of properties to gain a double emergency services levy. People who have a business on their home property are now getting two accounts and two lots of rates. As a result they are having to pay a double emergency services levy on the one property. This should not be happening. I well remember the former member for Enfield (Ralph Clarke) when this legislation was going through. He said words to the effect of, 'This is a great tax. We will make sure, when we get into government, we squeeze everything we can from this tax because we can make money from it.' They are not his exact words, but that was the meaning of his speech. So, it is very interesting.

Time expired.

Mr SNELLING (Playford): I rise to talk about three issues which are of significance in my electorate and which, perhaps more than anything else, affect the quality of living of my constituents and which keep my electorate office most

busy with various complaints. The first issue which takes up the most time in my office is that of disruptive tenants, to some extent in private rental housing but to a large extent in the two main government housing organisations, namely, the Housing Trust and the Aboriginal Housing Authority.

It cannot be overstated the misery that is created by living next to people who have absolutely no respect for a person's rights. I am talking about people who constantly hurl abuse and vulgar language across their neighbour's fence, who throw things over the fence, including faeces and urine, who splatter mud all over the cars of their neighbours, and who regularly break into their neighbour's house and the houses of other neighbours in the street. One particular couple in my electorate, whom I met when I called out during the break to see a group of residents who have put up with this for some time, were forced to sell their house and move out of the street. That is most unfortunate, that people should feel as though that was the only answer. To some extent I think that is a bit of a failure on the part of government, of whatever political complexion, that that has had to happen and that this was the only way these people could get some peace.

I have been delighted to hear the encouraging noises that have been coming from the Minister for Families and Communities, and that began with the excellent work done by the Statutory Authorities Review Committee of another place, chaired by the Hon. Bob Sneath. It did a marvellous job in bringing together the many different problems that arise from disruptive tenancies, and proposing, I think, some rather innovative solutions. It is good to see that the minister has taken up that report and started implementing some of its recommendations, one of which is to have a streamlined complaints operation in the Housing Trust to deal with disruptive tenants and to hold them accountable for their actions. I also note that previously the minister announced that tenants who continually disrupt the peace of their neighbours will be evicted and banned from applying for another Housing Trust home for 12 months. I must say that, when I receive complaints about disruptive tenants, more often than not it comes from other Housing Trust tenants. There can be no doubt that only a very small minority of Housing Trust tenants cause these problems, but the problems they cause in their streets are certainly disproportionate to their numbers.

Finally on that point, I will say that one of the other effects of disruptive tenants running wild in their streets is that it undermines the general goodwill in the community. Most people in our neighbourhoods and in my electorate do not object to having Housing Trust or Aboriginal Housing Authority homes in their streets, they get on very well with the tenants, but repeated incidents of disruptive tenancies quickly undermine their goodwill, the word gets around and it creates problems when trying to place houses—cooperative housing, Housing Trust or whatever—in those streets. People begin to object and kick up a fuss and it becomes quite a local issue about placing one such home in those streets. It is absolutely imperative, not only for the immediate welfare of the people who live in the vicinity of that housing, but also as a general social policy and maintaining goodwill in the community, that these complaints are dealt with quickly and efficiently and are stamped upon or nipped in the bud before they get out of control completely.

The second issue, and I know that I have raised it here before, is that of the significant tree provisions of the Planning Act. Again, a constituent came to see me. She lives in Valley View and she and her partner applied to the City of

Port Adelaide Enfield to have a tree removed from the backyard. I visited them and inspected the tree. For one thing, it was a big tree and obviously planted inappropriately close to my constituents' home. The tree also seemed rather sick. It was planted on an embankment, and, in a strong wind, it appeared to me to be in danger of falling on my constituents' home. They made an application, paid a \$51 processing payment to the council, and provided photographs of the tree. The council then requested that they obtain a report from a qualified arboriculturalist, which, in their estimation, would cost approximately \$250. This was after officers from Port Adelaide council had, in fact, inspected the tree. It seems a burdensome request on the part of the council to expect my constituents, who had already paid \$51 and were committed to paying many hundreds of dollars to have the tree removed, to have to pay \$250 to have someone come out and prepare a report to tell the council what would be obvious to anyone else who looked at it.

The neighbour of my constituent was also angry, and wanted very much to have this tree removed, because nothing would grow under it. It was blocking out the sun from her own garden patch and leaves were falling and blocking her drains, and so on. She is an elderly lady and it was very difficult for her to have her gutters cleaned, and she also wanted to have this tree removed. So, the owners of the tree and the people living in the vicinity all wanted the tree to be removed, and standing in their way was the Port Adelaide Enfield Council.

It seems to me that it is high time we reviewed that piece of legislation with a view to changing it. While its original intention may have been good, in simply wanting to protect trees that were of some significance, it has in fact resulted in councils applying a blanket ban to the removal of any tree, regardless of whether it is native or whether it is an introduced species, with a certain trunk circumference, which seems to me to be entirely unreasonable and an infringement upon the rights of property owners.

I also point out that, whenever these laws are made, they will often have unforeseen consequences and they can, in fact, work in the opposite way to what was intended. Certainly, I will not be planting any large trees in my yard, because I know full well that, should I at any time want or need to remove that tree, it will be an enormous effort on my part to obtain approval for that to be done, and I think any other home owner or land owner is going to behave in exactly the same way. Why plant a large, beautiful tree if it means that, in the future, you will be stuck with it; that you will not be able to have it removed if you need to? I think it is high time to look at reviewing that legislation with a view to giving property owners back their rights.

I also want to congratulate the government for the moves it has made with respect to hoon drivers, which is the third issue that I want to raise. Whenever I am doorknocking, or whenever I attend a street corner meeting, it is an issue that is constantly brought up. I believe these hoons think that they are involved in a fairly victimless crime when, in fact, there are a number of victims. They include the people living in the immediate neighbourhood who are woken, generally in the early hours of the morning, by this sort of behaviour. For many people, this behaviour is very frightening. I think the government's proposal for police to be empowered to impound the cars of these hoons—to take their cars off them—will do a lot. It will only have to happen to a few people before the word gets around that they cannot get away with excessive wheel spin and that sort of driving. I look

forward to the debate on that bill, and I hope that it has a speedy passage, for the sake of my constituents.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I certainly welcome the opportunity to rise today to thank the Lieutenant-Governor for opening the parliament and for presenting the government's direction document for the Fourth Session of the Fiftieth Parliament. I congratulate the Governor for the excellent job that she is doing. Happily, I am pleased to note that she appears to be doing it in her stride (pardon the pun). We are now about three-quarters of the way through the Rann/Lewis/McEwen/Maywald Labor government, and I am extremely concerned. But I will leave that until later. I always try to be positive, so I will start on a positive note first.

The Barossa, and the electorate of Schubert, is still the best place in Australia, and it continues to perform very well. The wine industry is still holding up, although it is under increasing pressure, with an oversupply of some varieties and also a downward trend on prices for these categories. The infrastructure also is under extreme pressure. We are outgrowing our essential services and facilities, our roads, our intersections, our bridges, our rail crossings, our hospitals, our water, power, child care—the list goes on.

Irrespective, wine companies and wine families are continuing to invest mega millions in the industry, particularly in the Barossa Valley. Most importantly, the quality of our wine, especially shiraz and cabernet, continues to be of very high standard—true super-premium wines sought all over the world—but I believe they are still too cheap. Wine regions in all countries are trying to emulate the Barossa and shiraz—two words synonymous with each other—but I can assure you that the taste test tells. We are still without peer, particularly with shiraz. Wine companies and wine families are finding niche markets and have diversified to hedge themselves against the forecast downturn in the industry, mainly as a result of huge increases in production the world over. I note with pride the life membership bestowed upon Mr Philip Laffer, previous winemaker of the year and now a life member of the South Australian Wine Industry Association. Well done Philip, another fine wine ambassador.

Chateau Barossa is well known to most members, particularly as the Queen visited it during her tour of the state in 2001. I was pleased to be invited to preview a new range of the Barossa product last week—a wine liqueur. I also note the recent announcement of the Tarac Industries product—this is yet another one. Mr Herman Thumm, a patriarch of the Barossa wine industry at 92 years of age, has further diversified the products available through the Chateau Barossa range. The taste buds can now be tempted with a new range of wine liqueurs, including Turkish delight, mint, cherry, royal delight coffee and rural delight chocolate—great liqueurs—and shortly a caramel, which is absolutely luscious. That is my favourite. Incidentally, the royal delight range has royal consent. A full range is with me in the house for members' approval, and they will be available for members in the refreshment room or in my office at no charge, compliments of Mr Herman Thumm. I hope to have the caramel very shortly. They are very attractively packaged. HT, as he is affectionately known, has capitalised on a niche market within the industry. He has used his entrepreneurial skills to create these liqueurs to maximise the grapes and grape by-products which would otherwise have been unused or left on the vine—very similar to what is being done by Tarac Industries, as we heard this morning. This new range of products adds to the already marketed grape nectar, jams

and sauces produced by the Chateau, and I know other companies are considering their options.

I know it is not normal for MPs to get up in here and support a particular commercial product or products, but this is new and innovative, and I will always spread the news of any innovative, healthy product—I am happy to do it for any product for any company. The best news is that these products are health foods—they have no added sugar and no preservatives, and they have a low GI or glycaemic index. In other words, they are good for diabetics and good for the weight conscious—and you can see it is working with me. In recent times two of the major businesses in the Barossa have announced new developments, and 240 jobs will be created—200 as a result of a \$50 million development of Berringer Blass, and Southcorp are spending a further \$10 million to boost its existing packaging and distribution operations. They will employ an additional 40 staff. Every day, every week, every month we hear of this: more people, more money, more development.

The excitement and activity generated by these and other similar announcements is being felt in the valley's housing and commercial sectors. We also now have broadband in the Barossa, but not in all of it. Just last week the federal foreign minister launched broadband in Mount Pleasant, and it is very welcome. Companies like this are unable to operate effectively on a regional basis unless they have decent access to the internet and to electronic transactions. The situation at the moment is terrible. I know that in Kapunda at the moment—even in my own office—you may as well go and have a cup of tea while you wait for the computer to find what you are looking for. It is terribly slow. Hopefully, the Kapunda community will come on line very soon, and I hope that Telstra and others will seize the opportunity to bring our communities on line with broadband or other facilities as soon as possible to enable us to have better and faster communications, whether by satellite, landline, broadband or whatever. Certainly, we are paying a big price if we have not got it, and we are all about regional development in regional areas. If we do not do this, it is going to cause a decrease in decentralisation. When they have broadband and the speed, communities—irrespective of where they are, whether it be Whyalla, Port Augusta, Nuriootpa, Angaston, Tanunda, Williamstown or Mount Pleasant—can operate the same as they can here out of Adelaide.

I now want to speak about the WET tax. I welcome the state Treasurer's move to give large wineries greater subsidies to combat the changes to the wine equalisation tax, which is due to come into effect next month. Smaller wineries with domestic sales of less than \$1 million will benefit from the federal government changes, and I congratulate the federal government on its decision. It took a while, but we have it now and I am very pleased. However, the larger wineries would be disadvantaged, particularly those who are just above the threshold where this comes in. The Treasurer says that the state government will move to ensure that wineries with cellar door sales over \$1 million will continue to get a 15 per cent subsidy, and I certainly welcome that. The Barossa is still this state's economic engine and I am pleased that the Treasurer has taken this stance.

Tourism in the Barossa continues to be successful but under a lot of pressure. I am also pleased that the government has allocated \$142 000 to some big tourism drawcards in the Barossa and surrounds. There is the 2005 Barossa Under the Stars. We do not know yet who the new guest is going to be and I hope that without Barry Salter there it will be as

successful as the others, but Barry Salter's demise and departure is a very sad event indeed. He was the driving force behind the most successful concerts that we have ever had, and he is no longer there, and I am very sad, and I question what happened and why he is not still there. He ought to have been rewarded rather than moved. There is also the Coopers Pale Ale Rally in South Australia, the Barossa Band Festival, the Barossa Vintage Festival 2005 and the Gawler Horse Festival 2005. I note that with the Barossa Band Festival we have got the Governor-General taking the salute. I have done that in the past, so certainly that will be an added drawback to have the Governor-General there to take the salute for the Barossa Band Festival.

Also, it is a pity what happened about the government funding for the Barossa Music Festival. Never a week goes by without somebody commenting about that, and it is a shame but it exists and it goes on irrespective, but of course, at a much reduced time and activity. It is sad that we heard today in the house about the multicultural festivals, and yet the government chose to cut that one to nothing and has not chosen to come back and have another look at it at all. It is very sad and I regret that. I understand that these funds have been allocated to assist with the marketing and promotion of all these events, which will raise not only the profile of the Barossa but also the wonderful state of South Australia. As the Minister for Tourism said:

Regional events and festivals play a vital role in drawing visitors to our regions, boosting the state's tourism yield.

I am pleased to hear that the state government has eventually taken seriously the benefits of tourism to our state, especially after it has cast aside the funding for the Barossa Music Festival, as I said. I note the minister's comments and announcements today, especially with the multicultural festivals. There are, however, major areas where this government needs to spend more resources in the Barossa, and they are the signage and our roads, our crossroads, our rail crossings, and our bridges, as I have already said. Signage is a very important issue. During the parliamentary break I had the opportunity to visit Western Australia, with a number of my colleagues. One of the activities I undertook was to visit the Margaret River area, and you all might smile, 'What would I be doing in Margaret River?' Well, we know all about that, and I certainly did.

Mr Snelling interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I am guilty, guilty, guilty, and I must say that I was impressed with certain aspects of things that I saw—and to a lesser degree with what I drank. The front of house presentation by some wineries and cellar doors was most impressive and it is obvious that tourists are very welcome and attracted to the area. Signage was of a very high standard, especially whole of region directories, which are far superior to anything that I have ever seen. The Barossa has the famous name and still the best wine, especially shiraz, as I have said. We are unique in the Barossa and we have to watch that we do not just become another suburb of Adelaide. However, in some instances we could improve our presentations.

I have written to the Minister for Tourism expressing my concern at the lack of clear tourism signage along the Sturt Highway and throughout the Barossa Valley. The minister has advised me that wine tourism signs has been identified as an issue across the state's wine regions, and that the Tourism Commission and Barossa Marketing have established a working group to review the wine tourism signs

throughout the Barossa. I understand that the South Australian Tourism Commission and the Barossa council have committed funding for a sign audit, and that should be completed by the end of this year. Once the findings of the audit are available, the Tourism Commission, Transport SA, and Barossa council will commit resources to commence the sign production and installation program.

I urge these agencies to work through the audit as soon as possible, as the Barossa and state are missing out on tourism dollars. A cursory glance after a drive past through the Barossa will reveal that we have a problem. It was first discussed with minister Hall who was minister at the time and now we have to go through all this gobbledygook, through all this bureaucracy, to highlight a problem that we know that we have got. So, let us get on with it. I am happy to support the government in doing that. I am regularly told that interstate and international visitors travelling the Sturt Highway end up in Gawler before they realise that they have passed the Barossa.

Unfortunately, many do not turn back and retrace their steps but merely change their plans, cancelling their visit to the Barossa altogether. More obvious and clear signage is required to entice visitors off the Sturt Highway. In Adelaide the signage for the Wine Centre is poor and inadequate. I regret that it was not successful under its previous format. People are saying that we should have tried harder and waited longer, because it is successful. People who go there marvel that it is a secret, not properly promoted and not properly signposted. It is a damn shame that under its original format and idea it did not succeed. Governments of both persuasions should have had more patience.

I wish to refer to grain marketing, particularly single desk. In Western Australia we also met with the Grain Licensing Authority, the GLA as we call it, and discussed the deregulation of barley marketing in South Australia. I declare my interest as a member of the Australian Barley Board, AusBulk and the Australian Wheat Board. The upshot of these discussions was that the GLA has not been operating long enough to ascertain how successful it has been. Last year's harvest produced record amounts of high quality grain, and the GLA cannot be judged on that quality and amount of grain. The true benefits or otherwise of the GLA can only be realised after a season with a return of lower standards and volumes, in other words, under greater pressure.

Members will recall the legislation this government touted to abolish the single desk in South Australia. The minister is flagging the \$2.9 million penalty payment withheld to South Australia as a reason to abolish the single desk. I understand that in the vicinity of \$9 million in national competition payments is being withheld from South Australia, not just the \$2.9 million because of the single desk. Let me guess! The government will not touch the deregulation of the taxi industry, something the President of the Labor Party and member for West Torrens holds dear to his heart. Why then pursue the farmers and the single desk?

The Minister for Agriculture has given us no leadership and farmers feel betrayed, particularly over his stance on the single desk. He makes comment about losing a \$2.9 million penalty payment. Is it not ironic that this is almost the same amount that it cost to establish the minister's labour saving ministry? We can double it for the establishment of a ministry for the member for Chaffey. What cheek to say that the \$2.9 million should be paid by the farmers or the barley industry! I challenge the minister to come up with a plan for the future. Do not just tell the farmers that it is not the

minister's problem, bury your head in the sand and tell them it is up to them. This is the minister's problem and it will be a big headache for him if the single desk is abolished, with what it will mean to the state's exports. The minister's job is to lead, to be a good example and to engender confidence and not the opposite.

The Economic Development Board's report commissioned by this government says:

The EDB believed that exports were arguably the single most important driver of future economic prosperity in South Australia. The export recommendations were based on the need to take a strategic approach to developing exports, coordinate and make government assistance more effective to producers and building on existing export models, with the aim of tripling South Australia's overseas exports by the year 2013.

That is a quote from Robert Champion de Crespigny, Chairman. The minister does not need to be Einstein to work out what will happen to the state's barley industry if the single desk is abolished. Farmers do not need the burden of finding a buyer for their grain. Their time is better spent farming, leaving the marketing to the farmers collective voice in the single desk. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted.

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

That the sitting of the house be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

Mr VENNING: In continuing my remarks, I want it noted, too, that I have no problem in extending through the dinner break. In fact, it ought to be a daily occurrence. I believe we should sit through 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m., particularly on matters such as this. However, back to the single desk. The farmers in this state choose to market collectively—call it cross-subsidisation, if you like—through a body in which they have great confidence. Further, if the minister is so worried about the loss of \$2.9 million, why did he not adequately fund the Round review, because that would then reveal the true net benefit to South Australia? Economic modelling undertaken by consultants employed by ABB showed the net benefit to South Australia, but the NCC required an independent review. Minister, that was the Round review; the review you did not adequately fund. Another \$1 million would have been very well spent, seeing that it is costing us \$3 million because the minister did not do so.

I turn now to the Ausbulk, UGH and the ABB merger, which will take place tomorrow. I again declare my interest, as I have done previously. Whilst on the issue of grains, I attended two of the grower meetings held across the state to discuss the merger of Ausbulk, United Grower Holdings and the Australian Barley Board. Tomorrow is a very critical time, because it is the last day. The three things will take place tomorrow to confirm whether or not there will be a merger. I also put on the record how pleased and proud I am of the leadership given by my brother Max as Chairman of Ausbulk. He works with one goal in mind, a successful merger, which is very creditable when you realise that its success will cost him his job as Chairman. Our late father would have been very pleased. After all, he was also the chair of SACBH, Ausbulk's forerunner. Generally, the meetings I attended were very well received, with over 50 farmers attending each of the meetings, and I attended one at Crystal Brook and one at Kapunda. The feeling at the meetings was positive, and some well thought out questions were asked by

the representatives. Growers have until tomorrow to vote. However, I think it is too late for that, although they could still vote electronically, or they could attend and vote at the meeting. I understand that the meeting is to be held at the Entertainment Centre, and I would like to have leave to attend that meeting tomorrow.

The Rann/Lewis/McEwen/Maywald Labor government has many problems. I turn my attention to the frustrations that I as a country member of parliament share with so many of my colleagues in relation to the smoke and mirrors Rann/Lewis/McEwen/Maywald Labor government of this state. The government's reputation as a 'gunna' government is now well proven. I question the substance of this government when so often I hear a 10 second media grab or read a headline without substance. My greatest priority and concern is the state of the Angaston Hospital, as the major health facility in the Barossa Valley. Clearly, it is the worst hospital in South Australia, but it does not attract the government's attention either in word or deed, or even thought. I hosted the federal member, Patrick Secker, during his visit to the hospital a couple of weeks ago. With a huge electorate like his, he said, 'This is the worst hospital I have ever seen,' and how many hospitals does he have in his electorate? I thought it was a rather brave statement, but he said it. He said it was a disgrace—disbelief.

At the Public Works Committee briefings, the bureaucrats shy away from questions about hospital upgrades. I often ask, 'Is this as bad as the Angaston Hospital?', but I have not had an admission that another hospital is worse than the Angaston Hospital. We should walk away from this archaic old building and immediately build a new facility at Nuriootpa. I do not care how you do it; whether you do it by PPP or whatever—it does not matter as long as we are able to get a facility there to give these people in a growing area in our state a reasonable and safe hospital facility, particularly for those people who have to work in it.

I want to very briefly talk about community cabinet, particularly the one held in Kapunda. In March this year, the cabinet visited Kapunda. The visit caused much excitement and anticipation for the residents. The ministers dutifully met with a number of delegations, but I question the value of those meetings. What has happened with those issues raised by the community? There were several raised that day. The Minister for Transport is in the house. I was in attendance at a number of the meetings, and I am aware of the outcome of those discussions. For example, I attended an on-site meeting with minister White's Chief of Staff, the CEO of Transport SA and a constituent who is most concerned about traffic issues in relation to where the sign is located on the outskirts of Kapunda. I think the minister is aware of it.

Whether or not I agree with my constituent, the problem is that we have not had anything reasonable back to tell him, and it has been since March until now. I do not always necessarily agree with what my constituents bring forth but, at least, I believe we should have an answer so that I can tell him what the situation is, because he is knocking on my door every week. He gets on the phone, and he gets a bit uptight and upset.

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mr VENNING: Yes, I would give it to the minister, but I know she has enough troubles of her own. I would give the minister the accolade of being one of the better ministers, and she has taken over a difficult job. The minister has been very good at answering my correspondence, and I am the first to admit that, but, when the situation is difficult, I do not mind

if the answer is 'No'. If the answer is 'No', tell me now and I can tell my constituent and be done with it, rather than have him continually ringing and knocking on the door. It does get him very upset.

Another matter also raised on the same day with the minister who came to visit us was the issue of a heavy vehicle bypass. It was another issue discussed that day with concerned constituents. The minister met with constituents who are unable to hang washing on their lines because of severe dust caused by the main dirt road running east of the township of Kapunda. This road needs upgrading and bitumising. Last Saturday, in the middle of winter, I stood there and could not believe the amount of dust coming off this road. In the middle of winter, after recent rain, and it is wafting across the town. No wonder these people complain. It is unfair. The amount of dust that must be getting into those houses is just terrible. I am not a regular one for dusting, but the women of this place, in a normal role, would know what it is like to clean a house. It is grossly unfair. If am being sexist, I apologise.

Unfortunately, the council's budget does not stretch far enough to cover this, and neither is it the council's responsibility. It is up to the state government to provide a heavy vehicle bypass at Kapunda. It just happens to be the same offending road—East Terrace, Kapunda. It needs to be upgraded, so why was Kapunda not bypassed years ago when other towns were? Now is the time to do it. I think the community has now realised it is time to do it and that it should be done now. At least be fair to these people who are suffering insufferable dust. Residents met with the minister and were hopeful that she would have some sympathy for their cause and take up their issues. But, what have we heard? Nothing.

Kapunda Homes is another issue. I will not go on at length about this, but I am very upset as I have raised this issue before. It took a long time for Kapunda Homes to get under way, considering it was all local money in the project anyway. The government took more than a year to give its approval. In that time the cost blew out by \$500 000. To her credit, the minister has at least come up with \$250 000, which is half of the extra money required. After all the huffing and

puffing, the project is well underway. I visited it last week. The walls are going up, and we are making very good progress. This should have taken only a few extra days or a week or two—not over a year and an extra \$500 000.

This is the way governments waste money; this is the way businesses go down the tube; and this is how you lose track of what is going on. Governments are the same as private enterprise. A good decision is a quick decision. Assess the situation, make a decision and get on with it. You took an extra year and an extra \$500 000—\$250 000 from the government and \$250 000 from the Kapunda community—because you just wasted time; you prevaricated and wobbled around. We eventually won but, by gosh, it has been a very difficult and long drawn-out process. This issue typifies this government. It looks good on the surface but, delve down a layer or two, and the truth is revealed. It is smoke and mirrors, and is certainly very concerning.

This government is a government of waste. It created a new committee last year for the member for Chaffey. Now that she has gone and is a minister, parliament is left with a committee that it does not need. The work could be more than adequately achieved by the existing ERD Committee. Now the government has created a new ministry just for the member for Chaffey at a cost of another \$3 million—more waste of money! What is all this costing? It has created a fourteenth new ministry especially for the member for Mount Gambier. The government said, 'We will not appoint a fifteenth minister', but what do we see? We see absolute hypocrisy and arrogance. It is no wonder politicians are not trusted. Is this more of the 'I can tell untruths because I can' attitude? Fifteen ministers in a state the size of South Australia is ridiculous. It is all about buying the numbers to govern and all about members who will trade their principles to boost their ego. Is this what the member for Hammond had in mind when he put Labor in for stability in government?

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.07 p.m. the house adjourned until Tuesday 21 September at 2 p.m.