

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 21 September 2004

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

HOSPITALS, RIVERLAND

A petition signed by 320 residents of Waikerie and surrounding area, requesting the house to urge the government to maintain obstetric surgical and other services currently available in Riverland hospitals and that these services not be restricted to one Riverland regional hospital as proposed by Professor Carol Gaston, was presented by the Hon. G.M. Gunn.

Petition received.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Premier (Hon. M.D. Rann)—

Presiding Officer Disciplinary Appeals Tribunal—Report 2003-04

By the Treasurer (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

Budget Paper No. 3 (General Government Expenses By Function)—Corrigendum

By the Minister for Energy (Hon. P.F. Conlon)—

Regulations under the following Act—
Electrical Products—Labelling Standards

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

Rules of Court—
District Court—Amendment No 45—Proceeds of
Crime Act 2002
Supreme Court—Amendment No 96—Proceeds of
Crime Act 2002

By the Minister for Transport (Hon. P.L. White)—

Regulations under the following Acts—
Motor Vehicles—
Fees for Examinations
Written-off Vehicles
Road Traffic—Fees for Inspections

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

Development Act—Development Plan Amendment Reports—
Mitcham, City of—Local Heritage
Victor Harbor, City of—Local Heritage Item

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

Local Council By-Laws—
Port Pirie Regional Council
No 5—Dogs
No 6—Taxis

By the Minister for Consumer Affairs (Hon. K.A. Maywald)—

Regulations under the following Acts—
Liquor Licensing—Long Term Dry Areas—Victor Harbor
Second-Hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers—Written-off Vehicles.

BAIL ACT

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

Leave granted.

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: The subject of bail has been raised frequently in recent weeks as a variety of cases have arisen for community debate. This is not exclusive to South Australia and it should be noted that we, in this state, have the highest remand in custody rate of any state in the commonwealth. But I am the first to acknowledge that any system is not without its difficulties, and I must say that some bail decisions have caused me and other government members to reflect on whether some reform of the current bail legislation is needed. That is why the Attorney-General has sought advice from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions about the current operations of the bail system in South Australia.

Following discussion with the Attorney-General earlier today, I have asked that he re-examine the Bail Act. I have asked him to report back next month with any recommended changes to the current law. Over the years, a number of suggestions have been raised about how the Bail Act should be structured by parliament. My greatest concern is the frequency with which some accused breach bail yet still seem to avoid punishment. While alleged offenders who have not yet been convicted are presumed innocent when given bail, frankly, at times, it wears a little thin to see them hauled back before the courts for breaches of bail conditions only to be bailed again.

In my book, these serial bail offenders blow their rights away by their own actions. The question I am asking is: why should they be bailed again when they have already shown contempt for the law and our courts by breaching their bail conditions? I am much more interested in the rights of victims. I would also be concerned if bail pending an appeal becomes routine in South Australia. I have always believed that, once an offender is convicted, there is no presumption of innocence nor a presumption in favour of bail. I share the prosecution's concern in a recent case that the court should be careful not to create a class of convicted offenders who get bail pending appeal.

The Attorney-General will now re-examine South Australia's Bail Act and report back with any recommended changes next month.

GLENELG TRAMS

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

Leave granted.

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: On Friday of last week, the state government announced that Bombardier Transportation Australia Ltd will be awarded the contract to deliver nine new low floor tramcars for the Glenelg to city light rail service. The government's \$47.4 million purchase will result in the delivery of a superior service for commuters using the Glenelg to Adelaide line, and is part of the state government's \$71.9 million plan to supply the super trams and upgrade our light rail infrastructure. This is the first major discretionary capital investment made into Adelaide's public transport fleet for 24 years and is a fantastic asset for our state.

But one crucial decision is yet to be made: we are yet to choose a colour for the trams. We have heard lots of different opinions in recent days about the colour of the trams, and what we want to do is ask the people of Adelaide to tell us what colours they prefer and also the reasons why.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I am already getting a bit of advice: black, white and teal seems to be a bit of a favourite. We need to make a decision soon, so we would like to hear from South Australians about their preferred colour for the trams and the reasons why they choose that colour. We would like to hear from the public over the next few days. Whoever puts in the most inspirational suggestion—and by that I mean the reason why they choose a colour rather than just what the colour is—we will invite to play a leading role in the unveiling of the new trams when they start in 2006. As well as that, we will give the winning entry and runners-up access to some free travel on the Adelaide metropolitan transport system. We are keen to attract as many people as possible back to public transport, especially our young people, and this is a chance for students, young people and others to have their say in how our trams will look.

The colours that the experts are currently looking at include Serpentine Green, Holly Green, Silver Grey, Bright Blue and Raspberry Red. But they are not the only options, and we are inviting people to nominate their favourite colour and why. People will be able to have their say by phoning the Adelaide Metro Info Line on 8210 1000 for the cost of a local call or by logging on to the Adelaide Metro web site. I urge everyone to get on board and have their say and take part in making the decision about the look of our new super trams. After all, the current trams have been around for decades and decades. This is a decision that will help mark our state and city. Here is an opportunity for the people of the state to have their say on the new super trams.

QUESTION TIME

CAMPBELL, Mr S.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): Is the Attorney-General aware that a member of his staff, Mr George Karzis, took part in discussions with Mr Stephen Campbell and Mr Don Farrell, during which a proposal was put to Mr Campbell that, if he ceased campaigning for the position of Assistant Secretary of the SDA, a defamation action against Mr Campbell would be dropped?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I will take the question on notice and get the member a detailed reply.

REGIONAL AIRPORTS

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): My question is to the Minister for Transport. How is South Australia disadvantaged by the pricing structure for the provision of air services at regional airports?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Transport): I thank the honourable member for his question, because it is important for regional Australia. But not only regional Australia, the whole of South Australia—in fact, the federal government refers to South Australia, when it is talking about air services, as a regional port.

Today I have written to the federal Minister for Transport and Regional Services, the Hon. John Anderson, a second time to lobby him to change his mind about air services pricing for South Australia. Members may be aware that a new five year pricing structure has been proposed by Air Services Australia, the government's arm. In July this year I alerted the minister to the impact that would have on the disadvantage suffered by secondary gateways (that is how

they class all of South Australia) under location specific pricing, and I advocated a return to network pricing. I urged the minister to show some leadership in this, because the outcomes of the present pricing structure are so detrimental to regional economies around the country, and to South Australia in particular. I also pointed out that they are at odds with efforts to reduce regional aviation disadvantages.

The proposal initially put was that our prices would increase from \$12.43 per tonne to \$14 per tonne at Adelaide Airport, but at Parafield Airport, for example, we would have a 1376 percentage increase in our charges from \$7.42 per tonne up to \$109.55 per tonne—an extraordinary increase in price that would undoubtedly hit Parafield Airport and threaten the operations of our services there, our training school, and the other operators at that airport.

The federal government has relented somewhat on cutting back a little on its proposal for Parafield, but it still remains that we are at a significant disadvantage compared to the rest of the country, and so I appeal to members opposite to use what power they have to convince the federal government that the pricing structure that is currently before the ACCC for determination disadvantages South Australia and must be addressed.

CAMPBELL, Mr S.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): My question is again to the Attorney-General. Did the Attorney-General's staff member, Mr George Karzis, brief or discuss with the Attorney-General—either formally or informally—the proposal that a defamation case against Mr Stephen Campbell would be dropped if he and his supporters ceased campaigning for the assistant branch secretary's position for the SDA? A letter to Don Farrell from a former union organiser states:

You would also be aware that through George Karzis, Judy Campbell, Stephen Campbell and yourself, an arrangement was made for us to stop campaigning and in return legal action against Stephen Campbell would cease.

The opposition has been advised that the legal action was a defamation action.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I will speak to Mr Karzis about the matter and will bring an answer back to the house.

APY LANDS

Ms BREUER (Giles): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Given the importance of country to Aboriginal people and to reconciliation, what land management projects are being implemented that will foster opportunities in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) lands?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I thank the honourable member for Giles for this important question and I acknowledge her great interest in the work on the APY lands.

As members would know, the APY lands are now part of a natural resource management area known as Alinytjara Wilurara. This will ensure that there is a coordinated, transparent and efficient process to look after soil, water and pest control issues on the lands. In addition to that I am happy to let the house know of an existing program on the north-western APY lands which has become a success story in South Australian natural resource management, and also in Aboriginal development.

The Kuka Kanyini Project is being run by the Department for Environment and Heritage in partnership with the Watarru community as a pilot project. This project has been embraced wholeheartedly by the entire Watarru community and I am hopeful that it can be replicated across the APY lands. Through the Kuka Kanyini model, the Watarru community is supported in its efforts to manage their country and strengthen their cultural ties to the land. The aim of the project is to build on the 10-year biological survey of the APY lands undertaken by DEH in partnership with the Anangu people. The survey identified a number of species in the APY lands which have not been previously found in South Australia, and highlighted the loss of other species due to the impact of feral animals on those lands. The project removes feral animals, expands controlled traditional fire patterns, develops natural sanctuaries, restores and protects waterholes and increases the availability of native foods for the community. It also has other benefits such as increasing self-esteem, providing income and work experience, improving diet and strengthening the respect for and understanding of cultural and traditional practices.

I understand from talking to officers in my department that the response from the local people to this program has been immense and that they are really getting a lot of personal satisfaction out of working on their land to remove feral animals and pests from it, and thereby, hopefully, allow an increase in native animals which they can then hunt. An example of the work carried out under the project: over 1 000 feral camels have been mustered so far, and the money raised from the sale of some of those camels has gone back into that community. Removing the camels improves water quality at key waterholes, reduces competition with native species such as wallabies and protects rock holes of spiritual significance from damage by the camels.

The project has the support of the Indigenous Land Corporation, Department of Environment and Heritage and the APY Lands task force. The commonwealth government, I am pleased to say, has indicated some interest in the project but as yet we have not received any financial support. I hope that, given its success, there will be a long-term financial commitment from the commonwealth government to ensure that this project is replicated across the APY lands. This is a very good, strong project which is reaping benefits for the local community as well as for the environment.

CAMPBELL, Mr S.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): Did the Attorney-General have prior knowledge of the involvement of a member of his staff, Mr George Karzis, in discussions held to broker a deal in which a defamation case against Mr Stephen Campbell would be dropped if he and his supporters ceased campaigning for the assistant branch secretary position for the SDA?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I did not attend any meeting with Mr Campbell whatsoever.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I have a supplementary question. Did the Attorney-General instruct Mr Karzis to attend the meeting and discussions with Mr Farrell and Mr Campbell with a view to establishing that the defamation case against Mr Campbell would not proceed if he and his supporters stopped campaigning for the assistant branch secretary's position?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I had no role in brokering any deal regarding the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association election although I am a member of the organisation, as so many MPs are, and that is recorded on the pecuniary interests register. Indeed, I am proud to be a member of the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): I have a supplementary question. Did the Attorney-General instruct Mr Karzis to go to the meeting?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Sir, that is not a supplementary: that is the same question.

The SPEAKER: With the greatest respect, I do not need the help of the Leader of the Government in determining whether the question is in order or not. Whilst the question repeats in part what has been already asked, the answers thus far have not addressed the issue. If the Attorney has nothing further to say, that is a matter for the Attorney.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: As I said earlier, these are matters from some months ago. I recall that they were canvassed on Matthew Abraham's radio 891 program some time ago with another minister, and I shall speak to Mr Karzis about the matter. On the face of things, I do not quite see what the gravamen of the allegation is.

EATING WELL PROGRAM

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is to the Minister for Health. Have guidelines been developed for South Australia's schools and preschools to encourage students to make healthy eating choices as part of the state government's campaign to combat overweight and obesity among children?

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): Risks from an unhealthy diet include heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some forms of cancer. Overweight children may also experience musculoskeletal problems, heat intolerance and a range of psychological problems including teasing, low self-esteem and unhealthy weight control practices. Guidelines have been prepared for schools, and I acknowledge the work and support of my colleague the Minister for Education and Children's Services in this process.

The 'Eat Well SA' schools and preschools healthy eating guidelines were prepared after extensive consultation with representatives from health, education, school canteen networks, parents, the Cancer Council, the Heart Foundation and state independent and Catholic schools. They provide a comprehensive framework and encourage schools to teach about food and nutrition, to promote consumption of fruit and vegetables, to make healthy foods available in schools and to help students acquire food skills. Schools and preschools are in the ideal position to play a key role in developing children's food preferences and eating patterns. We want to help children develop lifelong knowledge and skills around healthy eating, because the benefits of healthy eating include greater life expectancy, less financial cost to the health system and greater productivity. Healthy eating can also improve behaviour and concentration in class, thereby improving schooling outcomes. The estimated annual national cost of excessive weight in Australia is \$1.3 billion and rising, and it is important that we take every step we can to reverse the trend.

CAMPBELL, Mr S.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): What action has the Attorney-General taken as a consequence of the involvement of a member of his staff in attending discussions where a deal was discussed under which a defamation action case against Mr Stephen Campbell would be dropped after he and his supporters ceased campaigning for the Assistant Branch Secretary's position for the STA? Section 195 of the federal Workplace Relations Act provides:

Offences of Bribes

A person commits an offence if the person gives or promises or offers any benefit of any kind to a person with the intention of influencing or affecting any candidature, any support or opposition to any candidate.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): The question is hypothetical. The member for Davenport is alleging or assuming that certain things happened at a meeting. I do not know that at all. I do not share that knowledge. If there were violations of the federal Workplace Relations Act, then there is an appropriate authority to which to take that allegation. The appropriate authority is not the House of Assembly of South Australia.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. What action has the government taken to encourage the South Australian community to increase its level of participation in physical activity?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I thank the member for Norwood for her question and her ongoing interest in this issue. The government has released the state's Physical Activity Strategy. In part, it is about stronger partnerships and making sure we have the appropriate research and development, but it is also about promotion. With a view to promotion, the government has adopted the 'be active' message, which is going to be used by all of government from now on. Our vision is for South Australia to become a state where physical activity is part of everyday life.

One of the targets of the State Strategic Plan is to exceed the national average in participation rates for physical activity within 10 years. Money was committed in this year's budget to help promote the government's physical activity message. Last weekend, we saw a great example of this, something which I know a number of members of this house not only supported but participated in, and that was *The Advertiser* City-Bay Fun Run. That was a great advertisement for the 'be active' message. There was a record number of participants this year, and the government increased its funding for this event. The number of participants was in excess of 15 000—a fantastic tribute to *The Advertiser* City-Bay Fun Run.

I also acknowledge the great work of the volunteers. Running down Anzac Highway, it was fantastic to see so many people involved in this iconic event: young boys and girls who were so delighted to be standing there handing out water to the participants. The government would like to recognise the wonderful work of all the volunteers. We would also like to acknowledge the City-Bay Organising Committee, which goes to great lengths to make sure that this event is run smoothly for the participants. Apart from the number of people participating in this event, one of the great things about it is the variety of people who participate, whether it be

the elite runners (who obviously put the cream on the top of the cake for this event) or the participants in wheelchairs, joggers, runners, walkers, all those people participating in this six kilometre run. This is a fantastic event of which we can all be proud.

The Premier was there again this year as were the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Cheltenham, the member for Adelaide and the member for Morphett. I hope I have not missed anyone out, but it was great that so many members of parliament attended.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The member for West Torrens embarrassed me yesterday because he said that a lot of females finished in front of me. That is so, but there were a lot who finished behind me. I also acknowledge the sponsors, in particular, *The Advertiser*, which really gets behind this event in a big way and deserves special recognition. This is an iconic event, a fantastic event of which we can all be proud. I also acknowledge all the other sponsors. The government is delighted to participate in this event. I hope that all those members of parliament who ran or walked this year will be there again next year along with many others.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): Minister, if your government supports sport—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Morphett knows to address the question to the chair.

Dr McFETRIDGE: If the minister supports sport in the way in which he professes, why is the government taking \$2 million out of South Australian football?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): Not only is this government pro sport; it is also pro reducing the effects of problem gambling. As the member would be aware, there is a bill before the parliament, but the government has highlighted that it will not duck the issue when it comes to problem gambling. Unlike the opposition, unlike the former government, we are serious about problem gambling.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: This government is serious about problem gambling.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): I have a supplementary question for the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Will the minister clarify his statement about what the government will do? Will this be a conscience vote for the Labor Party?

The Hon. K.O. Foley: How can that be a supplementary to a question about sport?

The SPEAKER: Order! It is not: it is out of order.

HOMELESS SERVICES

Ms RANKINE: My question is for the Minister for Housing. What assistance is the government providing to the homeless services in the inner city?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Housing): I will not use my words to say what the government is doing for homelessness in the inner city: I will quote Mr Ian Cox, chairperson of the inner city services group and also

administrator of the Hutt Street Meal and Day Centre—a well-respected person who cares for some of the most vulnerable people in our community. In a recent edition of the City Life Project's newsletter, he stated:

After many piecemeal initiatives in the past, this is the first serious commitment by a state government to reduce homelessness in Adelaide. Homelessness has been a growing problem in various ways, affects not only those who are homeless but everyone in the city. But it also affects the confidence of everyone and the future of our city and state if we lack the will and ability to provide housing for those among us in greatest need. To their great credit Mike Rann's government didn't just seek the report of the Social Inclusion Board to diffuse a difficult issue. In near record time for a government they have committed \$20 million over the next four years to implement the board's proposed new programs. In terms of its long-term individual and social impact, seldom has \$20 million been better spent.

SENTENCE APPEAL, CAMBRIDGE CASE

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): My question is to the Attorney-General. Has the DPP informed the Attorney-General whether she intends to lodge an appeal against the sentence in the case of Derek Cambridge? I will briefly explain. On 6 September 2004 Derek Cambridge pleaded guilty to seven counts of unlawful sexual intercourse with two 7 year-old boys as well as acts of gross indecency. Judge Clayton imposed the sentence of 10 years but set a non-parole period of only four and a half years. The judge acknowledged that he was fixing a 'relatively low non-parole period'.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I thank the member for Mawson for his question. I have read most carefully the sentencing remarks of Judge Clayton in the Cambridge case. I have discussed the matter with an officer from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and I was informed that the Office of the DPP is considering whether to appeal against that sentence for manifest inadequacy. I have not heard yet from the Office of the DPP whether it has made a decision on that matter.

RESIDENTIAL BREAK AND ENTER PROJECT

Mr RAU (Enfield): My question is to the Attorney-General. Have there been any recent developments in the residential break and enter project that the Attorney-General launched earlier this year?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): South Australians reported almost 15 000 cases of serious criminal trespass in their homes in 2003 compared with about 18 000 cases in 2001 and about 18 000 cases in 2002. Victims of home invaders have told me that it is a terrifying experience to be confronted by criminals in one's own home. That is why the South Australian Crime Prevention Unit and the commonwealth government jointly devised a package of awareness material called the Residential Break and Enter Project to help homeowners reduce this risk.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Yes; that is the Howard Liberal commonwealth government. The interactive community presentation on CD-ROM along with an information booklet and supporting material for group facilitators is designed for Neighbourhood Watch associations, local government, police and community organisations. As I mentioned to the house, on 1 June I was pleased to launch the Residential Break and Enter community presentation CD-ROM at the premises of the Maltese Guild on Jean Street, Beverley, in my electorate.

The CD-ROM explains what action people can take to reduce the possibility of becoming a victim, as well as giving support to those who have already been targeted. Crimes, such as home invasion, are often the result of opportunity. The Rann Labor government is committed to helping more South Australians limit those opportunities so that people are less exposed to the risk of home invasion. The broad message to home owners may be obvious but not always applied. They include planning ahead for holiday departures or even when going out for the evening, getting to know a trusted neighbour, selecting security devices that meet Australian standards, being vigilant, reporting suspicious activity and thinking about how to make access to the home more difficult for the offender.

The state government is committed to reducing crime by 10 per cent in South Australia under the State Strategic Plan. The government has already announced the recruitment of 200 more police to give more security on our streets but, obviously, police cannot be everywhere all the time. All South Australians can play a role in crime prevention whether it is individually, in government, in business, employment, local government or community groups. The Crime Prevention Unit is offering community groups that receive the package a half-day induction workshop. The packages and more information are available from the Crime Prevention Unit.

INFANT HOMICIDE

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): Will the Minister for Families and Communities advise the house whether a police prosecution is under way or pending in relation to the death of a baby at Victor Harbor?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I thank the honourable member for her important question. As I understand, the police are continuing their investigations in relation to that death. So, neither, I suppose, is the answer to the question. It may be that, at the conclusion of those investigations, charges may be laid, but, at least to this point, I am not aware as to whether police are proposing to lay charges. However, the investigations, as I understand them, are continuing and, if that situation changes, I will be more than happy to bring back a further response to the house or to the honourable member.

Mrs REDMOND: As a supplementary question, does the minister have any idea how long those investigations are likely to continue before a decision is made as to whether there will be a prosecution?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, I do not. The way in which an investigation is carried out, obviously, is a very sensitive matter. Members would be aware that it can sometimes be many months before the relevant authorities are satisfied that they have sufficient evidence to meet the requisite standard of proof to ensure that a prosecution is successful. Obviously, they are matters with which we choose not to interfere lightly or, indeed, at all. I will make a further inquiry about the status of those investigations and bring back an answer to the house.

EDUCATION, INDIA DELEGATION

Mr SNELLING (Playford): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Educa-

tion. What was achieved during the recent trip to India by a delegation from South Australia's universities?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): Just prior to parliament's resuming, I was involved in an education delegation to India. The visit resulted in the signing of two landmark agreements with the prestigious Institute of Science, India's leading science university. The agreements were signed in Bangalore in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. The agreements with Flinders and Adelaide universities will boost the joint research and student exchange programs, and will be in two exciting areas of science—nanotechnology and biotechnology.

The signing of the two agreements, along with the encouraging meetings we had in New Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad, are good news for South Australia, and flag an optimistic future for our knowledge-based industries. One of the agreements reflects Flinders University's commitment to nanotechnology as a major area of research and teaching, and the fact that it offers the world's only undergraduate degree in nanotechnology. Flinders University recently hosted a visit to the state by three faculty members from the institute not only to facilitate but also to participate in the nanotechnology workshop.

The University of South Australia signed the second agreement with the Indian Institute of Science. The Ian Wark Institute at Mawson Lakes is a research centre of excellence in nanotechnology and biomaterials science. Already, we are attracting a large number of students from India. The Indian agreement with UniSA formalises research links in the areas of biomaterials, science, nanotechnology, chemistry, chemical engineering and mechanical engineering.

I was also pleased to be involved in establishing South Australia as the first Australian state or territory to send representatives from the higher and further education sectors under one state umbrella, and this is the first occasion that a state education minister has visited India—and I got very good media just on the fact that South Australia was represented in India.

An honourable member: What, here or there?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: In India. I fully agree with Professor Jain's recent comments in *The Advertiser* of 8 September, in which he stressed the need for Australian states to identify themselves as distinctive niche markets in India and to develop long-term strategies to build those markets. I should also say, at the risk of boasting, that the circulation of most of the Indian papers is huge. It is very interesting to compare not only the population of South Australia but also the circulation rates of the many papers in India. The smallest state that I visited had a population of 74 million. You can imagine the potential we may have in attracting students to South Australia.

There is no doubt that there are great social and economic developments for the state, and I think that we will benefit from our improved relations in both the education sector and also generally in trade with India. I think this will be a really important initiative to build on what the Premier will undoubtedly achieve in his trade delegation that will take place shortly. I would really like to congratulate the universities for working together. I think that this was a successful delegation and, if we can achieve more memoranda of understanding and agreements and also attract students to South Australia, as I said, I think this will very much contribute to both our social and our economic development.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): Sir, I have a supplementary question. With respect to the two agreements that the minister oversaw, can she tell the house who owns the intellectual property of the research from those?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I would like to thank the member for Bragg for her interest and also for the question. It is part of the agreement that the intellectual property will be shared by the institutions that are involved. There is a whole process, which I would not be able to describe adequately to the house, which has been decided between the institutions about how that intellectual property will be shared and also, if there are any economic benefits from such agreements, how those benefits will also be shared. If the member is interested, I am happy to provide information, via the universities involved and probably the Higher Education Council, about how that works.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): To whom was the Deputy Premier referring in the house yesterday when he described people raising questions about sexual abuse as 'loonies'? Yesterday, the Deputy Premier said:

Do you want to listen to loonies and ask questions on their behalf?

In a personal explanation, the Deputy Premier said that his comments regarding so-called loonies were not directed at the group Advocates for Survivors.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I think the opposition knows exactly who I am referring to.

HEAD OF THE BIGHT

Mr CAICA (Colton): My question is to the Minister for Tourism. What has the government done to improve the facilities available to visitors wishing to observe whales at the Head of the Bight on Eyre Peninsula?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): Through you, Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Colton because I know of his deep interest in ecotourism and facilities enabling the community and interstate and overseas visitors to enjoy some of our great assets.

The South Australia Tourism Commission has invested \$1.1 million in the redevelopment of the Head of the Bight interpretive centre. The project is one of those supported by the SATC's ongoing Tourism Infrastructure Fund, with \$560 000 in new funding provided this financial year to assist in the development of new tourism infrastructure. The total value of the projects that the government has funded this year has been \$3.4 million. The Head of the Bight redevelopment project is a nature-based tourism facility located adjacent to the Great Australian Bight Marine Park, home to the Southern Right whale which, as it was originally named, meant right for whaling but it is indeed right for tourism because it is one of those beasts that comes very close to shore and is easily visible to people at an interpretive centre such as the one at the Head of the Bight. It is estimated that there are only 4 000 of these beasts in the world, and that 600 to 800 travel north from the Antarctic each winter and spring to mate in the vicinity of this one lookout.

The facility was opened on 13 August and I have to say that I was pleased when the member for Morialta and I arrived safely after a somewhat turbulent flight, and acknowledge that she has been involved in this development previously and is a great supporter of ecotourism as well.

Some of the improvements include extension of the walkways to create a new lower platform, developments for whale watching, upgrading of the platforms, wheelchair accessible installations, more seating—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The leader of government business and the member for Bright will have their conversation privately, if they have it at all.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: In addition, there is a small visitor centre and a new ranger station. In order to be sustainable, there has also been a new dry composting toilet system and remote area power system installed. The work that has been done to achieve this has occurred with excellent consultation between the local landowners and community groups as well as with the Eyre Regional Development Board, Aboriginal Lands Trust, Yalata Community Council, ATSIC, and the Wangka-Wilurrara Regional Council. The visitor centre provides a future base for ongoing tours, and the redevelopment is really a tribute to everyone involved in this collaborative project. I recommend that members visit it.

CHILD ABUSE

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Why did the Minister for Youth not follow up on a commitment of 9 December last year to again meet with the person who had made serious accusations about public servants and others with access to children in state care? At the meeting on 9 December, the minister indicated that she would have the person providing information come back to give more information on the allegations. The minister did not make contact and approaches from the advocate to the minister's office for a further appointment were ignored.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): The difficulty that the honourable Leader of the Opposition seems to be having is that the follow-up—

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

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

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I need to explain this, because there has been some very unfair criticism that has occurred of the former minister in this regard. It is utterly appropriate that I take these questions because I, in fact, was responsible for the relevant follow-up with this organisation. Indeed, I initiated a request to meet relevant officers of this organisation but there was some difficulty in arranging that meeting. I finally did have a meeting with representatives of that organisation, but by that stage events had rather overtaken the situation—we had an inquiry in place, the same inquiry that had been bayed for for some months by those opposite. They were not interested in us investigating these matters, they wanted an independent person investigating these matters and, if I recall correctly, a number of these—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: They do not want to hear the answer.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Point of order, sir. The minister is talking about something totally different than the question referred to. A totally different issue.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: Just giving us a big cover-up, that is all. We are not getting any answers.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge that the matter being conscientiously addressed by the minister has nothing to do with the question.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is important that all members of this house be aware that over a period of time there has been a range of allegations made. I know that there was a sheaf of material sent around this house by the member for Unley. It probably lobbed on many members desks at various points in time. There has been a range of emails that have been sent to both the former minister and to my office. There have been representations made by various groups purporting to represent the survivors of abuse, and in this context we have been asked to investigate these matters. We have tried to make available as many different avenues to address these questions as we possibly can: help lines; paedophile task force; special investigations unit; Mullighan inquiry. What more are we being asked to do?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I might as well go straight to the Minister for Families and Communities. Has the minister been fully briefed by the previous minister on the information provided to her at the 9 December meeting? The minister yesterday told the house that he had been briefed and, in fact, then met with the same organisation. The opposition is aware that the minister has not met with any of the people involved in the 9 December meeting and his comments yesterday were totally irrelevant to the information provided at that meeting.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The difficulty is that those sitting opposite are not even familiar with the basic facts. The meeting on 9 December, as I said to the house—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Are you interested in the answer or do you just—

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: It is just another cover up. We would like an answer.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Is this part of the tactic of John Howard revving you all up to muscle up in the context of the federal campaign? Is this the new tactic, to muscle up—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Do you want to hear the answer or do you want to interject across the chamber?

Mrs REDMOND: On a point of order: the minister was using the term 'you', which I understood to be against standing orders, and was addressing this side of the house instead of your honourable self.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable minister will address the question and not the disorderly interjections from the member for Bright and others.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: What I have said to the house—I am not sure when I answered the question, but when I addressed the house on it yesterday—is that the 9 December meeting was with an organisation that called itself the Advocates for Survivors of Child Abuse. That was the name of the organisation that sought the meeting. Representatives of that organisation were the people with whom the former minister met. I met with representatives of the same organisation. Now, they may have well been different people but it was the same organisation. The issue is that I assume that the organisation represents the views of its members. That is certainly an orthodox position and the former minister asked for details so that she could do something with what were very vague and general allegations. She did not receive

any information, from what we can tell, and I certainly have received no information since. But that is not a criticism of those people because there are plenty of forums which have been set up that I expect that they will put this information before. They will raise these allegations before the relevant bodies and inquiries that have been established to hear this material. I must say that when I met with the organisation they seemed very pleased with the steps that were being taken. If that has changed, I invite them to communicate this information to us.

The former minister made that invitation. We again make that invitation. They can take their pick out of the many and varied inquiries—the police, the Mullighan inquiry. There are plenty of opportunities for them to put their point of view. If they feel that none of those options are suitable for them, perhaps they could approach us and supply the detail that would allow us to make some sense of the very broad allegations.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright): I have a supplementary question. If the former minister did not, as the minister claims, receive information of relevance from those people, will he explain what information the former minister received; and also explain under what guise the former minister was meeting with the group, as today she has indicated to the opposition that she was not meeting with those people in her role as Minister for Youth?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yesterday, at some length I attempted to answer a similar question. I also observed that I was not going to mention a name on the basis that I was not going to come in here and do something that those opposite did not have the guts to do; that is, stand up and put their credibility next to an allegation about a decent South Australian. I simply will not do that. I have invited people to come up with the material so it can be tested somewhere sensible, not in this gutless, whispering way that those opposite do.

CITY WEST BYPASS

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Will the Minister for Transport advise whether she will respond to the request of Mile End residents, concerned with the government's City West Connector plans, to have an independent sound engineer investigate—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for West Torrens does not have the call and there are no members on the opposition benches who are ministers. Therefore, it is not orderly for him to question them.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker. I will repeat the question. Will the minister advise whether she will respond to the request of Mile End residents, concerned with the government's City West Connector plans, to have an independent sound engineer investigate and report on the installation of noise attenuation measures?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Transport): Yes, I have been responding to requests of that particular group of residents. This group of residents has some concern about the City West Connector project that is going ahead in their vicinity. It is a \$9 million project to complete the inner ring route of Adelaide. The corridor for that project was known well before those residences were built. The residents' request is to move that road further into the parklands area,

further away from their houses, in a way that, unfortunately, cannot be done safely to meet design standards.

The other concern which the honourable member raised is to do with noise. My office has had six meetings with those residents. I met with them on Friday. I have met with them before. At that meeting, they asked for some information to be provided. I provided some information within hours of that meeting and the rest I undertook to provide early this week—and I will do so.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: Is the Minister for Transport confident that all houses adjacent to the City West bypass are not or will not be exposed to illegal noise levels as a result of the road upgrade.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The expert advice on which my department relies in advising me suggests that, according to the modelling, in 20 years' time (which is the outlook for the life of this road) the noise levels for those properties will be within acceptable levels.

Mr BROKENSHIRE: I ask a supplementary question. Will the minister therefore say whether each of the homes adjacent to the City West bypass have been tested (both internally and externally) to determine whether the residents are or will be exposed to illegal noise levels?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: That is a bit of a hypothetical question in the sense that you cannot measure today noise levels of tomorrow. No measurement can be taken to tell you what the noise level will be 20 years into the future. All you can do about the future noise level is to model it, and that has been done. The advice of my department is that those noise levels would be within the standard acceptable.

The member for West Torrens and I have had many discussions about this. In fact, the honourable member attended the most recent meeting with the residents in my office on Friday. In addition to meetings that he has attended with residents, he has also attended meetings with my staff, and he has expressed his concern to make sure that the state government does the best that it can for these residents.

At the request of the honourable member for West Torrens early in the piece and as a result of an earlier meeting with the residents, the government moved to increase the buffer zone. There is quite a large buffer between the houses and the road in the final design for this road. I think the residents are grateful for the role that the member for West Torrens has played in putting their concerns to the government and having them addressed. The Speaker has also raised with me concerns on behalf of those residents. So, I thank both honourable members, but I particularly thank the member for West Torrens who has had many conversations about this issue and written many letters and who at all times represents his constituents well.

SA WORKS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Has the government's rebadging of the previous training funding as SA Works resulted in fewer training outcomes and a cash windfall which has propped up TAFE finances? Late last year, the government announced the rebadging of its training funding as SA Works. Under SA Works, those brokering the training programs, including regional development boards, felt that to maximise their chances of funding they should nominate TAFE as the service

provider. This has resulted in a major loss of hours of training as TAFE has escalated its charges in some cases by 70 or 80 per cent. It has also resulted in a trade-off of fewer hours of training for a better financial result for TAFE.

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the leader for his question, which is directed at the portfolios for which I have responsibility.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.W. KEY: It is interesting that the leader did not know who the minister was, but I will not go there. The points that the leader makes with regard to registered training organisations and TAFE I will need to investigate. I am more than happy to provide him with a considered answer within a timely period.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I have a supplementary question. Is the minister aware of the fact that TAFE has raised its charges for these traineeship programs?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I can actually provide the Leader of the Opposition with information about TAFE fees and the measures that we have taken to try to make sure that, in capping the fees, there is access to TAFE services, which create very good job prospects on completion of those courses. Something like 94 per cent of students who undertake vocational TAFE courses get jobs; so, certainly, some hard evidence is there. I am happy to provide the fee structure. A deliberate action was taken by this government, particularly by the previous minister, to make sure that people who could not afford courses or who had difficulties accessing TAFE had assistance in that area.

The other thing that was also introduced, which I have reported to this house, was a program called Learning Works, where a number of students who did not get admission to TAFE have had the opportunity, through case management, to look at why they did not get into TAFE and how they could improve their application. This has been a very successful measure as well. However, I think the question that the leader asked me first of all was on the difference and issues claimed in regard to registered training organisations and TAFE and whether the profitability of those registered training organisations had been affected by people taking up TAFE courses as opposed to registered training organisation courses. I am happy to provide that information.

TAFE FEES

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Can the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education advise whether the state government will reduce the SA TAFE fees cap of \$1 200 per year which has applied since January 2003? In Victoria, the state government has set the yearly maximum rate that students pay for 2004 at \$625 plus a general services fee of \$150. In New South Wales, the fees for certificates I to IV range from \$358 to \$766 per year.

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the member for Hartley in his capacity as shadow secretary. The issue of TAFE fees and fee capping was implemented in 2003 and has been maintained at \$1 200 in 2004. I think that it is worth looking at the history of the TAFE fee indexation. In 1999-2000, there was an increase of 2.4 per cent under the previous government and a cumulative increase of 6.7 per cent, and that coincided with the introduction by the previous government of a single fee per annual hour per course. In

2000-01, there was a 2.5 per cent increase, so the fees were increased by the previous government by 2.5 per cent. In 2001-02, there was a cabinet index of 3.1 per cent but no decision to increase fees. In 2002-03, there was a cabinet indexation of 4.2 per cent but there was no increase because it coincided with the election commitment to reduce fees, and capping and increased concessions were implemented by our government. In 2003-04 fees have been increased by 3.9 per cent, which is a cabinet indexation, with the exception of the prevocation English as a second language and the preparatory education courses. As I said, prior to 2004, the last increase in TAFE fees was in 2001.

With respect to the comparisons with other states as raised by the member for Hartley, it is important to say that there is difficulty in making those comparisons. As the honourable member probably knows, the South Australian figure is an all-inclusive figure, whereas the other states charge separately for materials. My point is that one is not comparing the same calculation of fees for South Australia with that in other states and territories. South Australia is the only state (and, I think, territory, but I would have to check that) to include all costs in its standard fee. In comparison to the 2003 figures, an average course load of 540 hours per year for tuition fees, exclusive of materials costs, is depicted as follows: the standard for New South Wales is \$260 or \$710; Victoria, \$500; Queensland, \$491; South Australia, \$371; Western Australia, \$653; Tasmania, \$810; Northern Territory, \$378; and the ACT \$648.

As I said, there has been quite a history with respect to TAFE fees. Our government made a strong commitment to ensure that, where possible, we could reduce fees. Also, as I have mentioned, we looked at capping and increasing the concessions. It is very difficult to compare our fees with those in other states because South Australia is the only state to include all costs in its overall total.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN METROPOLITAN ADELAIDE

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement. Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Today Mayor John Rich (Vice-President of the Local Government Association) and I released the Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management Study. Stormwater is a potential hazard to life and property in high volumes, but it is also a potential resource of significant value. Polluted poor quality stormwater can impact on water courses, lakes and coastal marine waters and their ecosystems. Stormwater infrastructure in Adelaide has developed historically as a drainage and conveyance system. A multi-objective and catchment-based approach is needed if we are to address effectively the management of stormwater in urban areas.

In 2003 the Local Government Association of South Australia prepared a Stormwater Management Strategy targeted specifically at metropolitan Adelaide. It proposed a partnership approach to stormwater management between councils and the state government. The first step of that strategy required a metropolitan Adelaide stormwater management study to provide up-to-date information on the

existing stormwater system in Adelaide and how it can be improved, including options to make use of stormwater as a resource.

The study also considered how local government costs can best be apportioned across councils where works of multi-council benefit are involved. The LGA, in collaboration with the state government, has been managing the Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management Study, which was undertaken by Kellogg Brown and Root. The study suggests that high priority works at a cost of \$100 million are needed, together with \$60 million for other priority works, and it proposes a 10-year target for this to occur. Funding to support stormwater infrastructure has been provided by state, local and Australian governments in large part through the Catchment Management Subsidy Scheme.

This scheme has its origins in rectifying problems with stormwater infrastructure, but in recent years it has broadened its scope to encompass water resource management concepts. The state government doubled its contribution to this program from \$2 million to \$4 million per annum. Local government also contributes this level of funding. At this level of funding, substantial progress could be made towards addressing the high priority works identified in the report over the next 10 years. However, to address the full range of works additional funding will be required, and we will be seeking additional partners, including the Australian government, to undertake the necessary works.

At the same time, state and local governments have been reviewing relevant policy and governance arrangements for urban stormwater management. A draft urban stormwater management policy for South Australia has been developed and contains information about existing and outstanding management needs and proposes a number of strategies. These strategies include risk management to deal with flood events; mechanisms to improve water quality and urban amenity; and stormwater reuse where feasible. The draft stormwater policy is being further developed in consultation with local government and state government agencies.

In South Australia, many local government councils have shown considerable initiative in addressing stormwater management on a multi-objective basis. Since the mid 1990s, catchment water management boards have provided an additional focus and resources to tackle stormwater management issues. Efforts have been directed towards the Patawalonga and the Torrens catchments. This has included floodplain mapping, stormwater pollution control measures, public education and awareness and planning initiatives. The Local Government Association and metropolitan councils are to be congratulated for their proactive and collaborative approach to this important issue.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

TRANSPORT SA

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I would like to use my time today to bring to the attention of the house the behaviour of Transport SA which, in my opinion, is unconscionable. The behaviour I refer to is the usage of signs which suggest to the travelling public that there are roadworks being undertaken on certain parts of our highways where, in fact, no roadworks are being undertaken.

The incident that was brought to my attention last weekend by a resident of the South-East is not the first one.

In fact, I raised this matter some time ago directly with Transport SA, requesting that some signs be moved because at that time I was receiving complaints from constituents who found that local (or it might not have been local) police were targeting a particular section of road which had an 80 km/h 'roadworks in progress' sign on it many months after the roadworks in question had been completed. My long-suffering constituents kept getting booked because they had lost interest in slowing down on this particular piece of road.

The highways department has been given power to put up certain signage to modify driving behaviour when there are roadworks, and for very good reason. First, the road may be in a relatively unsafe condition and it would be inappropriate, while roadworks were being undertaken, for motorists to use a normal unrestricted speed on a particular piece of road if the road were subject to ongoing maintenance operations. More importantly, we often have Transport SA road gangs and/or contractors on the road on foot and exposed to the dangers inherent in motorists going past. It only makes good sense that the travelling public should be slowed down and made aware that these people are going to be on the road when roadworks and maintenance are occurring so that they can slow down and ensure the safety of people working on the road. But when the travelling public continue to use a piece of road and keep seeing roadwork signs when it is obvious to everyone that no roadworks are being undertaken, I believe that works against the practice of using the signs because people become oblivious to them. They say to themselves, 'Nine times out of ten on this road there is no-one there, there are no roadworks, there is no machinery, there is no danger to me or any of the work force involved.' So they do not bother slowing down and, in my opinion, that creates a worse problem than if signs had never been used at all.

The road I am talking about is the highway which runs from the Princes Highway, at a place known locally as Clay Wells, to the township of Robe. Probably 10 to 15 kilometres east of Robe along that road there is a T-junction and a side road called Springs Road that goes off to the north. Probably six months ago (I think it was last summer) Transport SA contracted the local council to do some work at the intersection and, rightly, placed 'roadworks in progress' signs there—I remember driving through the area a number of times while the roadworks were under way. When the roadworks were completed the signs were removed. I understand that quite recently, on 18 August, 'roadworks in progress' signs, 80 km/h signs, were put back at that point. As luck would have it two weekends ago, I think it was, there was a football final at Robe on Saturday afternoon and there was great activity by the police—I believe they were traffic police or highway patrol from Adelaide, because a motorcycle officer was involved in the incident that was brought to my attention—who pulled over a motorist who had lost interest in the signs because it was obvious that no roadworks were occurring at this place.

Contact was made with the local council and the council said, 'There are no roadworks happening here. It is a highways matter.' When the Transport SA office in Naracoorte was contacted, the response was, 'No. The council is going to do some work on the side road and the signs have been placed there and will stay there until the work is completed.' I have contacted the local council who tell me that there are no roadworks planned on the side road and they cannot understand why the 80 km/h signs are there. So, I call on the minister to ask her department what in the hell is going on, and also call on the Minister for Police to

refund and set aside all those speeding fines that were issued at that particular point over the last month.

Time expired.

EAGLE RISE CHRISTIAN CITY CHURCH

Ms RANKINE (Wright): On Sunday I had the pleasure of joining my parliamentary colleague the Minister for Health and member for Elizabeth at the opening of the Eagle Rise Christian City Church at Brahma Lodge. It was a wonderful event and we were joined also by the local mayor, Tony Zappia, who is much loved in the Salisbury community and who received an incredibly warm welcome from the parishioners at the opening, as did we all. We were also joined on Sunday by pastors Gordon and Joan Moore, who are the national directors of the Christian City Church International, and pastors Bruce and Julie Williams, the state directors.

It was a very special celebration for Eagle Rise Christian City Church and, as I said on the day, we so often hear the phrase, 'From small things big things grow', and it is so true in this instance. Ten years ago, a small number of people had a vision and they committed themselves to the task to ensure that their vision became a reality. For these people it has been a very interesting and challenging journey and it certainly has not been easy along the way. So, on Sunday we celebrated the tenth birthday of Eagle Rise church, and also the opening of their new church facilities. It was with very dogged determination and a real sense of faith and commitment, not only to their parish but also to the wider community, that enabled them to bring others on board to gain support and help along the way where and when it was needed.

This church began in a lounge room, someone's front room, 10 years ago. They progressed to a community centre and now they have very well-established facilities in Brahma Lodge. It was a struggle, as I said, and they paid particular tribute to the assistance that was given to them by the member for Elizabeth and the Mayor of Salisbury in the purchase of the original plot of land at Salisbury Heights where they had intended to build their church. Then they negotiated the purchase of an indoor cricket arena that was no longer being used, and I was involved in some of those negotiations when it got to the point where they had an unexpectedly high stamp duty bill. They also paid particular tribute to our Treasurer and acknowledged their appreciation of his waiving the stamp duty in that particular case.

In my role as parliamentary secretary to the Premier working with volunteer organisations, I see a great comparison between organisations that barely survive and those that thrive. Eagle Rise Christian City Church is a great example of an organisation thriving, and it thrives, I believe, because they make people welcome, because they give them the opportunity to be involved, to use their skills and talents, and to feel wanted and valued. They encourage young people to be a part of their community, not to sit on the sidelines but to participate actively. Very importantly, they allow them to pursue their interests and have fun while doing it, because fun certainly is not banned in this church, and I have been fortunate to enjoy and be part of their Big Blitz program which involves a whole range of young people from our local community. I have seen the young ones challenged, I have seen them involved in thought-provoking discussions and given the opportunity to voice their opinions. They keep these young people engaged and they keep them coming back. Eagle Rise Christian City Church has made its mark in our community in many ways and it is very relevant to the

community it services. It is a church that reaches out and actively participates in the wider community; not working in competition with other churches and organisations but, rather, collaboratively. Eagle Rise church extends the hand of friendship to those in our community who are experiencing loneliness; they lend a hand to those experiencing difficulties; and they are embraced, encouraged and empowered. Our community has been strengthened through its generosity, its care of others and its encouragement of young people. I congratulate all those involved in the church, particularly senior pastors Frank and Rosalie Eames. They have done a magnificent job, and this church does service a community in so many quiet ways that are so greatly appreciated by many people in our community.

HILLS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I commend the member for Wright for her comments about the Christian City Church. This is not the issue on which I want to speak today, but, along with my wife and children, I attended the official opening of the new church building for the Christian City Church in Hahndorf in my electorate. I had the pleasure of assisting the pastor and some church officials to work through some issues they had with the local approving authorities in connection with their moving into the new building. I commend the member for Wright for bringing that matter to the attention of the house.

That is not the issue I want to speak about today. As a good local member I think it is important that I speak about significant events that occur in my local electorate. I had the pleasure of attending the Hills Football League central division grand final on Saturday. The game was played between Mount Barker and Blackwood, and Mount Barker ran out winners with a score of 12 goals 12 points (84 points) to Blackwood 8 goals 12 points (60 points). It was a typical final's match. It was a hard, tough, physical game. It took the Barkeroos (which is the colloquial name of Mount Barker football club) some time to gain ascendancy over their opponents but in the last half of the last quarter, as quite often happens in football matches, they ran over their opponents and went on to a comfortable win by 24 points. I should also mention the grand final of the country division of the Hills Football League was played the week before: Meadows played Birdwood and Meadows ran out winners.

I spoke about this issue 12 months ago and received some criticism from certain sections of the community in my electorate. Nevertheless, I think it is important that all members raise issues of significance in their electorate, and I (and I imagine the majority of the community in the hills) regard the playing of the grand final in the Hills Football League competition as a significant sporting event.

The SPEAKER: And netball.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, you are quite right, sir. I also attended netball grand finals a fortnight before. The game was played at the Lobethal Sport and Recreation Ground. I had the pleasure of opening the new facility late last year. The Lobethal Sport and Recreation Committee extended its clubrooms quite significantly, so it is now a tremendous sporting facility in the Hills district.

The previous Liberal government (through the member for Davenport, the then minister for recreation and sport) granted some funds to the Lobethal club to assist with that extension.

This leads on to perhaps a broader issue about recreational facilities in the Hills district in general. I am a strong

supporter of sport and recreational pursuits in the Hills. We have had a particularly wet winter, and of course some ovals have suffered. The Bridgewater oval (as reported in the media) was completely flooded several weeks ago when the Onkaparinga River itself flooded. I regard it as an honour to be a patron of the Hills Football League. I have been approached by league officials and some club officials for help in expanding facilities within the Hills district, and I will be pleased to work through this with them.

Time expired.

CHAIN LETTERS

Mr SNELLING (Playford): I rise to speak about two chain letters which have been doing the rounds and which a number of my constituents have received and brought to my attention. One of these chain letters is from overseas, and it has been asking, in particular, elderly constituents of mine to forward their bank details in order to receive a cheque for many thousands of dollars. However, the most recent chain letter purports to be from a person named David Rhodes from Perth. He explains how his life had been falling apart and he had been having all sorts of financial difficulties until he started participating in this pyramid scheme, which involves sending \$10 to names which appear on a list and then making 200 photocopies of the letter, forwarding them on and putting your own name on a list of five names so that you can start collecting \$10 notes. Not surprisingly, the instructions say that you must send a \$10 note—cash only, no cheques. As I have said, having sent your \$10 note you then have to make 200 photocopies of the letter and send them on.

Naturally, this thing has flourished. I have warned my constituents not to follow the instructions in this letter, because doing so would put them in breach of the Fair Trading Act 1987 and the Federal Trade Practices Act 1974 (section 61) and that they would risk a fine of up to \$20 000. I understand that the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs is already onto this matter as many thousands of these letters have been handed in to them. They have sent letters to people whose names appear on the list warning them that, if they participate in this what can only be described as a scam, they risk incurring a heavy fine.

As well as the \$10 that people send in, the member for Torrens has reminded me that there are costs of between \$200 and \$300 when you take into account the cost of photocopying and the stamps required for postage. The instructions are also rather particular about the size of the envelopes and that the letter should only be folded once. It is good to see that the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs is onto this and, in particular, the recently appointed minister. It has been circulating heavily in my electorate, and I encourage my constituents and anyone in the state who receives one of these letters to contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs and not to participate in this scam.

DRIVER BEHAVIOUR

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Members will have noted that on Monday 13 September a week ago an article appeared in *The Advertiser* entitled 'More drive without a licence' which highlighted various statistics indicating that the number of people caught driving without a licence has increased by nearly 50 per cent in three years. It is very clear to me that that number is going to continue to increase. I took the trouble to check how many offences there are against the road

rules in South Australia; there are some 309 offences that a person can be caught for through which you can lose demerit points. I guess that it is one way to reduce congestion on our roads because the time is fast coming when there will be thousands and thousands of people without their licences and, obviously, as law-abiding citizens they will not drive their vehicles, although *The Advertiser* article indicated that thousands continue to drive even without their licence.

I think it is interesting to have a look at a few of the things that drivers can get caught for: failing to give a stop signal long enough attracts two demerit points; failing to signal when slowing suddenly, you lose two demerit points; at a red traffic light, if you fail to stop before the stop line, you lose three points. Just about every time I cross the road outside Parliament House on North Terrace and King William Street, I see cars failing to stop before the stop line without exception. Taxis are often key offenders; they could lose three points every time. I wonder whether people need to be educated a little more or whether they are even aware of it in some cases.

Another one for which you lose demerit points is at yellow traffic lights if you fail to stop before entering the intersection. How many people see the light change to yellow and say, 'Right; I can go.' That is illegal, so you are subject to losing three demerit points. We all know that you only have to lose 12 points to lose your licence. I was nearly caught the other day when coming to Parliament House from my electorate at about 10 o'clock at night on a 110 km/h stretch of road—National Highway 1—from Port Wakefield to Adelaide. Suddenly I noticed a 60 km/h sign; in other words, I went from 110 km/h to 60 km/h. If another vehicle that had just passed me had been in the road, I would not have seen that sign, but I saw it and slowed down.

I was thinking that, if I had not seen it and continued at 110 km/h, it would have been transgressing the speed limit by more than 45 km/h, and I would have lost 6 points if a police officer at 10 o'clock at night had decided, 'I think I will catch some people.' Normally you would think, 'What excessive, dangerous driving', but why was the 60 km/h sign there on Port Wakefield Road? It was there because they are adjusting a corner leading off the main highway. There was not a workman in sight at 10 o'clock, which is not surprising. I understand that they can knock off at 5 o'clock, but they left the speed signs out and, therefore, there was every entitlement for a police officer to catch people, if he or she had wanted to. There was no police officer there, so I suppose I could have kept going in excess of 60 km/h.

I do not have time to go through the 309 points, but there are a huge number. Perhaps an education program needs to be launched by the government or build more goals because so many people are going to be driving without their licence, I suspect, in the next few years, if they are not alerted to some of these particular issues. It is of real concern to me as one who travels somewhere between 40 000 and 50 000 kilometres a year and, therefore, the chances of my getting caught are perhaps that much higher than a person who only travels something like 10 000 kilometres per year.

READING TO BABIES

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): There has been quite a bit of attention recently on the importance of reading books to babies. Some have regarded the interest of the federal Leader of the Opposition in this as just a political stunt. It is far from a political stunt. This leadership is based on well-researched

information and has already demonstrated important results in the United Kingdom. Recently I have been enjoying a book called *Baby Power: Give Your Child Real Learning Power*. It is exactly what this book shows is possible when parents start reading to their children at a very young age. The cover notes on the back of this book state:

This book builds the foundations for your child's future development. Reading and sharing books with a baby is not only great fun, but as recent research by Professor Barrie Wade and Dr Maggie Moore proves, it is one of the best ways to give a baby a head start in life. In the Bookstart study, children who had shared books with their parents when they were babies did better in ALL basic subjects at school, by approximately 30% in literacy and 25% in numeracy. In this book, Barrie Wade and Maggie Moore offer parents a practical guide on choosing the right books for babies and give lots of advice on how to use books to maximise a baby's potential.

Barrie Wade is Professor of English in Education at the University of Birmingham, and Maggie Moore is Director, School of Arts and Social Sciences at Newman College. The program to which Wade and Moore refer was one commenced some years ago in Birmingham in areas that were experiencing huge educational challenges. The program started with the visiting health nurse bringing the parents a package of books, together with some information about how to share books with babies when a baby is nine months old. As I indicated, this program has been going long enough to demonstrate substantial results.

One piece of information contained in this book is that 68 per cent of Bookstart families said that looking at books was among their child's three most enjoyable activities, compared with 21 per cent in other families; and 75 per cent of Bookstart families said the books were presents they usually bought for their children compared with 10 per cent in other families. Also, 43 per cent of Bookstart families said that they took their child to the library once a month or more compared with 17 per cent in other families.

These are not families from some other areas where the expectations regarding education might be different: the evaluation was done in schools where there was a mixture of Bookstart children and non-Bookstart children from equivalent social groupings. The book provides encouragement to parents with respect to the value of reading with children. One mother, Tracey Ebanks, states:

I always pictured reading to him when he was older, before bedtime when he was old enough to understand—say at school age. To be honest, I did not think a baby could concentrate on a book. I was amazed at how he watched my hand from the very beginning. He's always learning. He has learned how to hold the book, to turn the page, he points to the picture, he feels soft furry things in books, like Baa!, he lifts flaps.

Another testimonial from a parent, Sue Parry, said that one of her children was a very difficult baby. Ms Parry states:

... she cried almost continually from birth. In desperation, when she was a few weeks old, we looked at books together and I read extensively to her. It was a brief respite from the crying—she was mesmerised. Her love of books grew over the years and she was inconsolable if bedtime stories were missed (they rarely were).

The City of Onkaparinga, through the library and the Noarlunga Health Service, is working towards introducing to our local community a new book bank program, as well as another program called Babies like Books, Too. The council has recognised the importance of engaging children in reading books so that they can establish the foundations of

literacy before they get to school.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.
(Continued from 20 September. Page 141.)

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): In making my contribution to the Address in Reply, again I thank and congratulate our Governor on the terrific job that she is doing. She is a wonderful and inspired appointment, and she continues to set an enormous example to South Australians. Certainly, they very much appreciate the role she is playing. Her Deputy, Mr Krumins, is also a very dedicated man. He is playing a large role in the state nowadays, and he does a terrific job. The Address in Reply sets out the government's agenda for the next period of time, but what we heard was re-statement after re-statement of things that the government said that it intended to do, most of which it has not got around to.

Really, it is more of the same. We have seen an enormous lack of action on behalf of the government. I heard nothing within the Address in Reply to give me faith that the government is about to start doing things and is getting some action started. It looks to me like this is the new Labor way of doing things: basically, you go out and talk about things, you have plans and targets but you have no action plan as to how to get there. You do not do anything. I think that, federally, there is a real warning for Australia in that. Australia has been going well under Howard and Costello, and it would be a major mistake for Australia to go the same way as the states and vote Labor.

We would really see the economy suffer from such a decision. What we have seen federally can be contrasted with what we have seen happen in South Australia. We have a 'can do' national government which, over recent years, has achieved an enormous amount. The dangers of a change to Labor are very easily seen in what has happened in South Australia. This government is interested only in tomorrow's headline rather than going out and making things happen, and that comes down to the fact that this government does lack vision.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes. Again, we heard today that the next big thing for South Australia is a competition to work out what colour trams we are going to have.

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes, well, I would have thought that people in government would have more to do than run a colouring-in competition for our trams. That is indicative of the fact that we are not seeing any vision from the government—it is all care and no responsibility. It cares about tomorrow's headline but it is not willing to take any responsibility for the future of South Australia or what is going to happen six months, 12 months or two years down the track. What we are now starting to see is a real contrast between this government that talks a lot and the last government that achieved a lot.

When the last government came to office it had a real financial mess to sort out—there were some huge problems—and over the eight years we saw them sorted out. But it was also a government that had a lot of vision. We had a vision to get South Australia back to where it should have been; it

had fallen so far behind. Over the eight years, by the end of our second term, South Australia had regained its position as against the rest of Australia, and that showed through a whole range of indicators. We had really picked up our economic activity. We had entered the export markets of the world in a way that South Australia had never seen before. We were a government that had a lot of vision. We had around the cabinet table people who were willing to pick up and champion causes and make sure that they got certain industries ticking along, and we saw a lot of that. Through that vision, a whole range of industries prospered in this state—for example, IT, defence, manufacturing and electronics.

A couple that I saw first-hand (which we now hear the Premier claim himself, but he gives us credit for setting up a couple of these) are food and bioinnovation. While the government talks big about claiming these as its own and wanting them and whatever, it is not backing up its words. The food industry in South Australia was a major contributor as we built the exports from \$3 billion up to \$9 billion: it was huge. We had a plan. We were on target—in fact, we were ahead of target. We had all these initiatives in place that were coming together, and we were getting a lot of new exporters and truly building an industry where we had a natural advantage. We were building on that natural advantage and really getting somewhere.

Most of those initiatives within the food plan have stalled. There is very little action in that area. I attended the Fine Foods event in Melbourne a couple of weeks ago. In the past, South Australia well and truly had been the leading state at all those food exhibitions. This year, it was damn sad. We had a group there who did a terrific job; the people who were there were great. But there were no new people there. We used to have the biggest stand by a mile, and we used to win best stand year after year. This year we saw Western Australia, for instance, with a stand about three times the size of ours. I can remember the Western Australians looking at what we were doing about four or five years ago. What has happened is that they have had a look at what we were doing and copied it. Meanwhile, this state government has not funded the programs within the food plan. It has had no new ideas. It has offered no incentive or facilitation for new exporters, and what was a massive mover late in our term has somehow now fallen backwards.

Bioinnovation, with which the member for Waite was also involved, is an area where we have achieved a lot. We hear the Premier talking about that a fair bit, but we are still spinning on from what we did while in government. On Friday this week a turning of the sod will take place at the Thebarton Bioscience Precinct. That was one of our plans; it is something that we put in place. It has taken a long time for the government to move it to the next stage. It was a damn good strategy of ours. It is continuing, but without a lot of encouragement and, certainly, without a lot of funding from the government. It is yet another example that what we did well this government really does not know how to manage. It knows how to talk about it and how to claim credit for what we did, but it is not taking things to the next step at all. It really does not have the vision. It has a strategic plan, and I think we have all looked at that strategic plan. It is simply a set of targets. Those targets are already in trouble. So many of those targets you could just about throw out the window—whether it is exports or employment; a whole range of things. However, we have seen some clear trends from the govern-

ment. One is the fact that it cannot go out and tell South Australians the truth on a whole range of issues.

With respect to employment, we see lots of nice press releases and whatever. Australia is going very well employment-wise: South Australia is the only state that is battling on the employment front. We are faring worse than the other states. Full-time jobs in South Australia are down over the last 12 months, which is different from everywhere else. Women have been losing jobs constantly in South Australia. Full-time jobs in retail have dropped alarmingly over the last 12 months, and we hear nothing from this government about how it will address that slide. All we hear is that it will pick out a figure each month that is the best one it can battle through with, and it spins out a story that jobs are up. I am sorry, but jobs have fallen enormously in the last 12 months.

Despite all the talk of a strong economy, we really have slipped as against the other states. As I said, in 2002 we were right up there: South Australia had caught up with and gone past the other states in a range of areas. That is just not the case now. In terms of full-time employment, in South Australia we are down 2 per cent over the last 12 months; Australia is up by 3 per cent.

The Howard Costello government has given Australia a very healthy economy, and the other states have been well and truly able to capitalise on that. In South Australia we have seen a government that has always decided to keep its hands off, and we have not shared with the rest of Australia the premiums that this federal government has created for us with respect to prosperity. We have lost 9 100 full-time jobs in the last 12 months. That is a lot of Mitsubishi's. Some 9 100 full-time jobs went and, of course, there is a reasonably grim outlook for the next year because of the Mitsubishi closure and the fact that we have not seen anything from the government to give us any confidence that it will be able to turn around that loss of jobs. With respect to other economic indicators, unemployment was virtually unchanged at 6.2 per cent, but nationally it improved, dropping from 6.2 per cent to 5.5 per cent. Why South Australia cannot share in that with the other states is really a question that this government needs to answer.

Exports was one of the great successes of the Liberal government in its two terms but, again, over the last 12 months they are down by 9.2 per cent—and that is on top of a very similar performance in the previous 12 months. In the last two years we have seen exports drop from \$9.1 billion down to \$7.5 billion, and that is against a backdrop where the government still says that it will triple exports. They are still saying it, yet the reality is that it has actually dropped by about 20 per cent in the last two years. That is very different from what the Premier tells South Australia. He is out there not worrying about reality, just the spin that we are going to triple exports in the next decade. Well, I can tell the Premier that that is not going to happen given the way that his government is running the economy. Exports will not be \$25 billion: they will be about \$7 billion or \$8 billion unless this government gets off its backside and does something about it.

Retail sales rose less in South Australia than anywhere else. That has then transferred into jobs lost in that sector. We all heard the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Industrial Relations tell us about the number of jobs that were going to be created in South Australia by the deregulation of shopping hours, but the reality is just so different to what everyone was told. We have seen a drop in full time

jobs in South Australia over the last 12 months of about 20 per cent. That is quite a remarkable drop. It is not happening in the rest of Australia; it is almost unique to South Australia and, once again, it is because of the 'hands off' approach of this government. They must be able to see the figures, even though they do not admit to seeing them. They must see them but not have a clue how to address the issues that come out of that.

Last year when they were really battling to find a good figure out of that financial year, private investment suddenly became the important figure, because that was the one that was up. Time and time again we heard how well South Australia was doing, because private investment was up. Well, if they are going to talk about how wonderful new private capital expenditure is, then have a look at last year—it actually fell by 11 per cent. So, I do not think we will have to put up with the Premier or Deputy Premier using that figure this year, because what was, according to them, the single most important figure last year in relation to the South Australian economy is this year down 11 per cent. I do not think we will hear them quoting that one. They will have to go through the whole chart of accounts and find a figure somewhere that is reasonably good.

An honourable member: Taxes!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Taxation levels are probably the way to go. In regard to the KPMG report, there are a couple of things that we ought to know about it—and one is that the government helped to pay for it to be done. The other thing is that it is purely a measure of what business costs are in your state: it is not a measure of how well you are actually getting out and selling that. We have seen those stupid billboards in Sydney and Melbourne. If, in fact, we want investment in South Australia, it is Sydney and Melbourne where the decisions are made to spend money and put capital expenditure into South Australia. What do we do? We play a game to get a headline of putting offensive billboards up in Melbourne and Sydney and offending the very people who make the decisions on how much money is spent in South Australia, how big our branch offices are, whatever else. But it is all about grabbing a headline, trying to be tough, 'We can take the Vics on; we can take the New South Welshmen on.' Well, sorry; it is not working.

Really, the KPMG report is actually an indictment of this government. They seem to think that it is a credit to them: it is not. It says that despite having very low business costs in South Australia this government cannot attract new business investment. Investment went down 11 per cent, so what does that say? On one hand the government is saying that we have this terrific advantage in South Australia, but then you look at our performance and, despite that great advantage, this government has not been able to deliver on jobs and investment at all. We are heading backwards compared with the rest of Australia on that.

The state was doing very well in the late 1990s through to 2002. We have now fallen off the matching of national growth that we had achieved, and that is very much because of the 'do nothing' approach of this government. We have seen what was the department of industry and trade halved in size, and if you talk to people in there you hear that there is no direction and there has been no leadership of that particular department. The intellectual property—the people in there who could help investors because they knew how to get through the bureaucracy and through government, who knew the financial constraints and where the infrastructure was and whatever—have all gone. That department has been

absolutely gutted and with it has gone a lot of opportunities to create new business in this state.

We have heard much about surveys. As soon as there is a survey that the government can spin in a certain direction they are out there spinning it into something it is not. We did not hear anything from the Premier or Deputy Premier on the latest Sensis business confidence survey (the old Yellow Pages survey, and a much used one over a long time), which they are basically ignoring, because that survey actually told us that business confidence in South Australia is well below the national average, sales and profits are falling and capital expenditure is the lowest in the nation. So much for making anything of this KPMG report of low business costs when people are just ignoring us.

Meanwhile, while we are getting very little industry development, we have a government which is awash in funds. The GST came on line much faster than we thought, and an almost immoral level of property taxes are being collected by this government—they are just sucking billions of dollars from the economy. Despite that huge taxation windfall, the public health system here is in tatters. There are longer waiting lists for surgery than ever before, and regional health services are in an absolute mess. At the moment, people in country areas are despairing about what they are going to do with their budgets for the coming year—they are having to contend not just with increases in demand but also with cuts to their budgets. In real terms, country health budgets have been reduced and they face a major challenge as to how they handle that.

Labor promised us better hospitals, but the government's own reports show that compared to two years ago less surgery is being done, hospitals have cancelled more surgery than virtually ever before, 50 per cent more patients have had to wait more than a year for surgery, and patients are waiting longer for urgent and semi-urgent surgery. We hear the minister in this place tell us day after day that the health system in South Australia is under control.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I think that it is all right for the minister to say that, but if you were to ask the thousands of people waiting for surgery I do not think that they would say it is under control. Ask the doctors and nurses who are under pressure, trying to hold together a system that is in disarray; or ask the family of a young man with psychological problems who committed suicide after he was rejected by the very system that is supposed to be there to support him; or ask the family of the nine year old boy who had to wait 18 months before he could get an appointment with a specialist—and that was not out in the bush but at the Women's and Children's Hospital. After having to wait for so long, they were then told they would have to wait a further 18 months for surgery. So, that family paid several thousand dollars to have him operated on in a private hospital, because they had been let down by this state and its health system. Yet the Premier and his colleagues respond to that crisis only when the opposition can get those individual cases out in the media. Almost the only way that you can get a particular instance dealt with is when it becomes a media issue; if it is a media issue it then becomes of some interest to this government. If it is not a media issue they are not interested.

Yesterday the member for Newland raised the issue of the spinal unit and gymnasium out at Hampstead. Now that she has raised that in here, something might happen with it. They could not have cared less about a letter or two coming in about it, but because the member raised it in here they will

consider it. As I said, it is a disgrace. Because all of a sudden it is reported, hopefully we will see something happen, but only because the member raised the case. Even when we get those responses they are more of a bandaid; they are just enough to make the issue go away as a media issue. They do not go and fix the system: they just put a bandaid over the bit that they see.

It is also a government that has been dishonest with the public about law and order, prisons, crime, the parole board and so on. The Premier has made much of being tough on law and order, but that has translated into attacks on bikie groups, a couple of high profile, keep them in jail type cases—that is good for a headline. Is this a coincidence? The average gaol population in South Australia last year increased by two. When I was on the radio with the Deputy Premier as Minister for Police, and he was talking about how tough they were on law and order, and I raised that, he said, ‘They are the two that the gaol population has increased by.’ Well, sorry; that just goes to show that it is about those two high profile cases.

Their whole tough on law and order stance revolves around keeping two people in gaol against the recommendation of the parole board. If that is being tough on law and order, I think that that is a headline and nothing more. It is total spin. The parole board head, the highly respected Frances Nelson, says the Premier is pathetic on law and order. That is the head of his own parole board, a lady who is well respected out there and who knows the system very well, and she says that the Premier is pathetic on law and order. Her deputy, Phillip Scales, has resigned in protest at the government’s refusal to provide the system with the resources that it actually needs.

I do not know how we can have a government that is going to be tough on law and order when they do not resource the very areas that look after the safety of the community. Police are under resourced. We saw the ridiculous situation with mobile phones; we have seen what has happened with uniforms, even with bios. The court system is totally under resourced. The Attorney-General got rid of crime prevention programs to spend more money on lawyers, and we have not seen much as a result of that. The parole board is under resourced. People are out there breaching bail; it is a system which this government is not resourcing and, therefore, their whole tough on law and order stance falls over. We saw the example the other day of the person who breached bail ten times, and what happened? In mid July he received a \$10 fine and a six-month good behaviour bond. That is almost a present.

As for broken promises, much as been said about the Premier’s pledge card and what he has done about matching what he put on that pledge card. Promise number one was about electricity. ‘We will fix our electricity system, and an inter-connector to New South Wales will be built to bring in cheaper power.’ The Premier had the temerity to put cheaper power in bold type. Cheaper power! Power is up 30 per cent, because the Rann government basically botched the entry into the national system. They botched it. The national market was initiated by Labor anyway and, while gas prices were not on the pledge card, they have absolutely botched the entry into the gas market because they did not plan. They left it until the last minute and then said, ‘Oh, hell. We are going into the gas market now.’ What happened? Prices went right up. Not only did prices go right up but also, in panic, so that they did not go any higher, they snatched about \$65 million—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: —\$64 million out of the budget—money that should have been there for health, education and for disabilities, which is an area that they have ignored. What happened? They decided to give that to the gas companies so that they do not have to increase the price too much—and it is only because they messed it up.

Promise number two on the pledge card was better hospitals and more beds. I am not even going to talk about that, because we have seen what has happened with the health system, and the Premier has to be judged as a failure on that. The other promises are nebulous things: better schools; more teachers; proceeds from speeding fines to be directed to police and road safety. We have seen what they have done with road safety. Road safety largely comes back to the quality of your roads, and road funding has taken an absolute savaging from this government. We know that some people like potholes; some people like driving on country roads. We were told that some people prefer to drive on roads that are full of potholes and whatever else.

Mr Venning: Who said that?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The member for Reynell, who was trying to get a couple of roads dug up. There are plenty of potholes in our electorates, I can tell you. We have seen no evidence whatsoever of most promises to do with road safety. Members should ask the teachers about whether the Premier has met his promise of better schools and more teachers. During Labor’s election campaign we heard that there would be no new taxes and increases in state charges would be in line with inflation. Well, members should look at what has happened with taxation. First, we have the River Murray levy. How do you impose a tax to make it acceptable? You come out with a whole heap of spin: ‘We will raise the tax and put it all into the River Murray.’ The Deputy Premier, when we came back, had to stand up in this house and apologise, because when that legislation went through he gave this house an assurance that the River Murray levy money would be on top of what this government was already putting in; and that no money in the first year would go towards our funding requirements for the Murray-Darling Basin Commission to which we were already committed. He had to come back and apologise.

What did they do? They used part of the levy in the first year to replace funding for which they were already committed. The levy went there, but they took money back into Treasury that was supposed to go towards the river. The net effect of what this government has done is that it has not put any money towards the river. They have put a hand into the pocket of every South Australian and asked them to make a contribution towards the River Murray, but they have put not one extra cent into the River Murray. People should not be fooled about the River Murray levy. It should not have been imposed. It has been imposed on community groups in a way that is totally unfair and, for many of them, unaffordable. The Minister for Administrative Services through SA Water has sat on his hands. We have heard plenty of promises but very little has happened to fix the inequities of that particular tax.

Their first real fundamental bust in relation to taxation was when they increased stamp duty on property transactions. To increase the rate on homes over \$200 000 at a time when stamp duty was going through the roof is an absolute breach of the trust they asked South Australians to have in them. They had been in power for only months and they broke it with that one. What a time to do it! They should have been looking at dropping stamp duty because of the fact that property values were going up so quickly. They did it right

in the middle of a property boom. This Treasurer is just so obsessed with the AAA rating. He does not care how we get there. He is absolutely obsessed. Water and sewerage charges are up 33 per cent—more than double the rate of inflation. That is another broken promise. We were told that those charges would not go up any more than inflation. Water and sewerage charges have increased 33 per cent during their term.

The Deputy Premier made a lot of statements at the time of putting through the change to cater for the 14th minister. So many promises were made about there being no 15th minister. Yet again, it is a broken promise. The other thing that has really characterised this government, particularly in the last 12 months as people have woken up to them, is their habit of shooting the messenger. You can only call it 'shooting the messenger'. I worry sometimes in question time when the opposition raises an issue and the first thing they want to know is who told us. They want to know whether it is someone in a department, because they want to find them. I fear for some of those people because there is no doubt that 'shooting the messenger' goes further than just Frances Nelson and other high profile people. I think a range of people need to be wary of this government.

I have mentioned Frances Nelson, because she had the temerity to tell South Australians the truth about what is happening in law and order. She has been abused. One of the press releases criticising Frances Nelson was absolutely disgraceful. I have not seen such a public personal attack on a person. In a crazy way it questioned her health. The government was furious with her because she was telling the truth. That particular press release is something of which the government should be absolutely ashamed. We hope we never see that repeated.

They are an unaccountable government. They rely on headlines rather than action. A few journalists in this state have had the temerity to criticise the government and, by hell, the phone lines have almost melted. There is a real bullyboy culture going on with anyone who dares to criticise the government. The phone call could be from the Premier or the Deputy Premier; and people in the Premier's media unit are fairly good at making angry phone calls. As far as accountability is concerned, what we have seen in this house over the last 18 months to two years has been a total lack of accountability. On a number of occasions—and it has been almost a daily occurrence—ministers have had to come back to correct the record. They will say whatever they want—

Mrs Redmond: While the cameras are here!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: While the cameras are here, they will say whatever they want; and then they will step back in late at night to correct it. Some of it is very serious; and we have seen the bizarre behaviour of the Attorney-General on several occasions. His 'bikies barbecue a cat' turned out to be a fox and a mob of kids. They have had to make a number of corrections because they have got it wrong—and it has been an absolute disgrace.

It is impossible to try to get an answer in this place. In the past few days, the Minister for Youth has been asked questions about which only she knows the answer. But she has handed them over to someone else. It makes you wonder what people have to hide. That lack of accountability goes to the next level as well. Members of parliament have been entitled always to chase down concerns for constituents. In my own electorate we have worked closely with SA Water and transport to help our constituents sort out problems very quickly. You can no longer do that. When you go there, they

say, 'Sorry, but you have to go through the minister's office.' So, problems that used to be solved by a phone call will now take six or 12 months because no-one is allowed to tell the opposition anything. The officers in those departments who are paid for by the general public are not allowed to work together to sort out some pretty mundane, everyday problems which are annoying people. There has been a shutdown.

Turning now to industrial relations, the KPMG report is great for business costs and whatever, but the message that this government is sending to the rest of Australian industrial relations is very questionable. South Australia has had a good record for many years, but we have had more disputes over the last couple of years than we have had for a very long time. Some of these are private disputes. The government says, 'That's not our problem.' I don't know why we have a Minister for Industrial Relations if that is the case. Also, they don't seem to be able to sort out their own employees. For example, I refer to the dispute with the PSA. You always have to work through these issues, but the minister will not sit down and talk to them to work towards a resolution or an agreement. It is almost unbelievable: that is his job, but he refuses to do it.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Perhaps the PSA isn't putting enough into the Labor Party. I know that the PSA is very disenchanted with the Labor Party at the moment, so the Labor Party might not be able to count on the PSA like it has in the past. I don't think they have treated the PSA with anywhere near the respect they deserve in this dispute. Basically, this dispute has been mishandled, and I hope that the people of South Australia will not suffer as a result. We have the Fair Work Bill hanging over our heads. This is a ridiculous bill: it is not about workers; it is about power for the unions. This will be a real test of how much power the unions have over this government—if we ever see the Fair Work Bill. Yet again, the government seems to be battling to put anything into action.

As far as child abuse is concerned, the government seems to have had a bit of a rebirth. They kept saying that there was no problem. I was abused for calling for an inquiry because they said there was absolutely no need for one. Several months ago we heard from the Paedophile Task Force that it would be wrapped up by the end of the year. The government seemed to take the attitude that this was not a big problem, that we did not need an inquiry. They said they would put a helpline in place and that that would fix the problem. Now, processes such as the inquiry and several others that they have been dragged into putting in place they are claiming as their own. We hope they get this inquiry up and running as quickly as possible so that we will not have to put up with the delays that we have had on so many other issues.

I do not know what the Minister for the Environment has been doing about radioactive waste, but I think we are further away than we have been for some time from finding a home for our radioactive waste. This minister seems to have no idea of where he wants to put it. South Australians have been lied to, conned and cheated in terms of everything that the government has said about the radioactive waste debate. It is the biggest circus we have ever seen. They have told lies such as it would be a threat to our clean and green tag. Western Mining actually volunteered this information. People need to realise that everyday at Roxby Downs the amount of radiation that comes out of the ponds is equal to more than 50 years of the radiation that would have come out of a national radioactive waste repository. So, if you double the daily output from

Roxby Downs it would take 100 years for the repository to equal that—and it is just up the road. How the hell will that impact on our clean and green image? The people of South Australia have been absolutely conned. It has been a dishonest tactic: it has been all about media and spin, and wanting to take everyone on. They say, ‘We are the tough guys.’

We asked them about the Victorian Labor government’s proposal for this toxic waste—and that is a hell of a lot worse than low-level radioactive waste. What does the Bracks government say? It says, ‘We will poke it over in the corner near South Australia. We do not mind driving through all the towns to get it there, but we want it well away from Melbourne. We will put it near South Australia.’ There are several points about that toxic waste dump. The first is that it is a lot more dangerous to everything around it than any radioactive waste repository. Secondly, they are putting it about 12 kilometres from the River Murray, which is crazy.

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes. There is a whole range of issues with this thing. The Minister for the Environment told us, when we last sat, that no toxic waste would be stored there: he had been told that. If you go through the history of this proposal, all the Victorian government has done is change the name. Instead of it being called a toxic waste dump, they have called it a highfalutin name.

An honourable member: Industrial waste.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Industrial waste. So, they have changed the name and, because they have changed the name, the Minister for the Environment told us that there will not be toxic waste stored there. I am told that they are using technology from about the 1970s and, because they push it over near us, it is a lot closer to Adelaide than to Roxby Downs, or the Woomera site for the radioactive waste repository—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: It is close to the river, and right alongside one of our richest production areas in the Riverland. It is a great horticultural and wine growing area. It is a fantastic and productive area. We have heard from the Minister for the Environment that there is no problem whatsoever putting a toxic waste dump alongside that area, but you cannot put a responsible, low-level radioactive waste repository hundreds of kilometres away. The people of South Australia have been absolutely conned.

We saw the Premier yesterday battle somewhat with the questions about his attitude to uranium. We heard him say yesterday morning that we need a couple more Roxby Downs. We all know Roxby Downs. Roxby Downs actually produces a fair bit of uranium, and the government does not mind taking the royalties. But, the Premier has said that we have all this enormous prospectivity and we will get these new mines up, yet he told us in this house yesterday that their ‘no new mines’ policy still exists. So, if there is uranium in it, it will not go ahead. Anyone who knows anything about the mining prospectivity of South Australia knows that you will not have another Roxby Downs. The chances of another Roxby Downs, or anything the size of Roxby Downs, without uranium in South Australia, are very slim. So, the tripling that the Premier talks about is absolute rubbish, unless he is not telling us the truth about their policy on uranium; but I have no doubt that a Latham government will stop mining in South Australia, anyway, because of the federal Labor Party’s stance on uranium.

So, as we face a federal election, I think that the message that this government has to get is that South Australia is not

sharing proportionately in what the Howard and Costello government has done for South Australia. It has done a good job and, because it has done a damn good job, we have been able to survive a couple of years of this government. That is because of Howard and Costello doing the hard yards, having some vision, making some decisions and getting on with the job.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes, there are some scary scenarios federally. The prospect of Simon Crean as Treasurer really is a worry, and we certainly hope for South Australia’s sake that we do not see Simon Crean as federal Treasurer. That is really a frightening prospect. But, certainly, as I said at the start, it is so much more of the same thing. It is all about plans and strategies and whatever. There is nothing about doing anything. We have heard much about thinkers in residence, but it is about time this government became doers in residence. Let us see some action.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Hon. G.M. Gunn): The member for Giles.

Ms BREUER (Giles): Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and let me say what a pleasure it is to see you in the chair again.

An honourable member: He is a great supporter of yours.

Ms BREUER: We are great friends; we are neighbours. I want to pay tribute to Her Excellency for the wonderful role that she plays in this state and the example she gives to our young people and particularly to the women in this state.

I wish to address a number of issues related to the government’s legislative and policy program as outlined by the Lieutenant-Governor’s speech. Some mention was made of the Social Inclusion Board and the Economic Development Board. I thank the Economic Development Board for its visit to Whyalla two weeks ago; it was a very successful visit. We were able to showcase locally some of our achievements. I was particularly proud of the achievements of OneSteel this year and in the last two or three years, which I highlighted in yesterday’s grievance debate. I am also very proud of our aquaculture industry and its achievements. The Economic Development Board had a most enjoyable visit out there, and we were able to taste our wonderful kingfish.

We have two companies involved in the aquaculture industry in Whyalla: a very small family business called Southern Star Aquaculture, which is producing premium quality fish, and South Australian Aquaculture Management, which is much bigger and recently had some very exciting news when it won its third consecutive export award at the Upper Spencer Gulf Export Awards. It also won, for the second time, the AusIndustry Innovation Award. I think it is extremely important for the Economic Development Board to come out into the regional areas and I felt very privileged that Whyalla was its first visit. It also gave our community a great boost in confidence to host the board’s visit.

Mention was made in the Lieutenant-Governor’s speech of the first Strategic Infrastructure Plan for South Australia, and included in this is the new Adelaide Airport terminal. Travelling by plane as often as I do, I am delighted to see the speed with which the development is progressing. However, I was perturbed recently to learn of the possibility that passengers on regional airlines may have to walk up to half a kilometre to get from their planes to that terminal. I am sure that the member for Flinders, who is present in the chamber, would have been perturbed by that also. I think that is

disgraceful, if it is true—there is some doubt about it—because I am sick of regional passengers being treated in this way. Currently planes are parked at great distances from the terminal and passengers have to walk through all sorts of weather conditions to get inside.

I have arthritis and I am really quite disabled these days; I cannot walk long distances. Indeed, I do not use one of my local airlines because of the distance that they park from the terminal. I am not alone in this—many of my fellow passengers are similarly disabled or are elderly, and this is not fair. If the money is being spent on this huge facility, and it does not include equal facilities for our country passengers, I think this is discrimination against us. I hope that this issue can be resolved satisfactorily. I will be calling on the members for Stuart and Flinders if this is an issue.

I want to talk about the state of the roads in the northern part of the state, and I listened with interest to the comments by the Leader of the Opposition. Much criticism has been expressed in the past by the member for Stuart, in particular, on the state of the roads, ably supported by the member for Schubert who I believe has done some travelling with him. Because of this, I decided recently to go and have a look at these roads and travel on them to see what I thought about them. I have travelled quite extensively in my part of the state, but there were some areas that I had not been to which are borderline as to whether they are in Stuart or Giles. I thought that I would try these roads, because I have heard a lot of talk about the Oodnadatta Track, the William Creek Track, etc. So, a couple of weeks ago I took off and went for a drive up there.

I found that the unsealed roads along the Oodnadatta Track are in very good repair. The Borefield Road from Roxby Downs to the main road north to Oodnadatta is in very good condition except for some rutting and, of course, that is caused by drivers using the roads before they dry out. I am sure that other members would share with me the concerns about drivers doing this and not thinking about driving along these wet roads. I also believe that the Oodnadatta Track north to William Creek is a good track. I believe that that part of the road allows travel at highway speeds. Some road grading was being undertaken, and that will further improve the surface of those roads, which is good to see.

The same is true of the road north of Oodnadatta, because I travelled further north up the track to Hamilton Station, turned right and headed for Dalhousie Springs. The road to the springs was a rough bush road but relatively easy driving in the standard four-wheel drive wagon. I also travelled on the Oodnadatta to Coober Pedy track. Considerable work has gone into improving that road and it is now a high quality unsealed road. I met many outback people on my trip and, despite asking, I heard very few complaints about the state of the roads at the moment. The main issue is that we must maintain the budget to allow us to keep maintaining those roads. If the budget was to drop and things were to slip, then we could be in serious trouble, particularly if there is a very wet season. The roads have been maintained this year and they are still looking very good.

I would also urge tourists and others who use those roads to obtain up-to-date advice before using those roads. Travelers have to realise that these are outback roads and they should not expect bitumen conditions, and sensible driving is very important. It was interesting that, on my return, I was talking to some people about my trip and someone bobbed up and said that some of their friends were at Oodnadatta and that they were saying what a terrible road it was from

William Creek to Oodnadatta. I could not believe it, so I made some inquiries and asked what they were talking about. They had a brand-new four-wheel drive vehicle and a brand-new caravan, but they expected bitumen conditions. Much of the time it is in the eye of the beholder, but I was very happy to report to the minister that the roads are being maintained and they are in good condition, as I have found in other parts of my electorate. I have travelled quite extensively on some of the other outback roads in my area in recent months and I have been happy with all of them. However, we must keep maintaining those roads.

I was pleased to see government's \$15 million plan for accelerating exploration to open up our vast mineral and petroleum resources. That is very important for my part of the state. I make particular mention of this and I put in a special word for our opal mining industry. I very much appreciated the \$100 000 grant earlier this year for exploration for the Coober Pedy and Wellbourne Hill areas. However, I am afraid it is not enough. We have to have some more next year if we are to find new fields and keep this industry alive. It is a vital part of our tourism industry. Many opal miners still operate in the Coober Pedy area, as they do in the Andamooka area and further north. However, our miners are an ageing population. The sons are not taking up the industry, unfortunately. As is said in other areas, there are old miners and bold miners but there are not too many old bold miners. They have to be super aware of the dangers involved in opal mining and work accordingly because it is a very dangerous industry. This is why many young people are not becoming involved in the industry.

However, if we could find some new fields, it would recreate some of the fire in the belly for those young people and get them back into the industry. The opal mining industry has been of huge importance in the past in this state, and I believe we have a need to revive it. This morning I heard of a tragic death of a miner yesterday in Coober Pedy which is very sad and once again not only reminded me of the dangers of opal mining but also the importance of finding some new fields and opening them up. I was also interested to hear of the new Fisheries Act, which is a great opportunity to protect our fisheries. Coming from a part of the state where fishing and fisheries are important, it is important that we do protect those industries and our fisheries. I am very happy with the new whiting regulations, and I live in an area where whiting is very much an industry. I have had very few complaints about these new regulations, which is interesting because I have heard comments from other people who say that they have received complaints. I am amazed at the standard of the Liberal opposition. I believe that they are taking notice of a lot of metropolitan based anglers who fish in our areas.

I think that is why I am not getting any complaints from my area. Our people appear to support the new size limits and the bag catches which, I believe, are sensible and responsible limits. The reason they are not complaining is because a lot of anglers from other areas do come into our area. We have our huge snapper competition, and the fishers keep coming back for the rest of the year. We do see huge amounts of fish being taken out of our area over two or three days and, in the past, a lot of people have expressed concerns about that.

I believe that these new regulations are very important, because there is no need for people to take as many fish as they do in one sitting. Of course, the regulations limit the size of fish from 30 centimetres to 31 centimetres, which is a sensible move. This regulation applies to both recreational and commercial fishers. Another complaint is that this is all

being put onto recreational fishers and not commercial fishers, but I challenge that. We tend to victimise and pick on our commercial fishers. I cannot understand it because people are always talking about taking away net licences from commercial fishers.

A couple of weeks ago I had a meal at one of those lovely fish restaurants in Gouger Street. I was sitting there and thinking that people go on about the damage done to the industry by commercial fishers. My experience is that very few commercial fishers are that silly. Fishing is their livelihood. They must maintain that livelihood, so they are very careful and very aware of the environmental issues involved. They are very aware that they must keep this industry sustainable, so they do not cause these problems. However, if we took away all these licences that people are screaming about we would not have any fish in those Gouger Street restaurants. Most of the time we would be eating shark, and I think that people forget that.

We talk about taking away licences and we talk about stopping the commercial fishers, but where are you going to get your fish from? Lots of people do not have the opportunity to go out and fish themselves. People in my part of the state can do that, but people in lots of other parts of the state do not get that opportunity. We must be sensible about this issue of commercial fishers, and we must realise that the great majority are very environmentally responsible. I have no problem with the reduction from 20 to 12 in the daily recreational bag limit for King George whiting and the boat limit from 60 to 36.

If you catch a decent size whiting, 36 fish is a lot of fish. Certainly, that number of fish would satisfy any family, or two or three families. I do not think that there is an issue. Again, we are getting back to the issue of people who rape and pillage an area and leave with their fridges, caravans and everything else filled with fish, and that is not good for any environment. I think that the possession limit of 36 fish per person is also an important issue. We all know that people are catching fish to sell illegally, and there are great numbers of them. If this practice can be monitored more closely I think that it will be an important way of stopping some of this activity occurring. People come back with their 12 fish, but you see a lot of them head off three or four times in a day. This regulation will limit the number of people who are able to do that and, hopefully, put a stop to that industry because I think that this is where a lot of our fish are disappearing.

I want to get back to this issue of commercial fishers and point out some facts about that industry. The commercial catch of King George whiting in the fishery has declined by 47 per cent in recent years. That is due to a combination of licence reductions, the implementation of no-net enclosures, fluctuations in stock size and an increased recreational catch. Also, the number of commercial fishing licences has been reduced by 41 per cent since 1989. So, not as many commercial fishers are around the place. We get back to this issue of blaming commercial fishers for the shortage of fish, but over 70 per cent of fish are taken by recreational fishers; and 70 per cent of the commercial catch is taken by hook fishers rather than by nets. People mention all the time that these net fishermen are doing all the damage, but it is not that at all. Most of the catch is taken by hook fishers. I am very happy with the new regulations, and I will be supporting them. I hope that, once they become aware of these facts, people will also support these new fishing regulations.

Another area mentioned in the Governor's speech was the issue of mental health and health services. About three weeks

ago I attended the funeral of a young man in Whyalla called Eddie Schubert. He was a 20-year old young man who had killed himself while hospitalised in Whyalla.

I cannot go into the details of this case because, of course, it is the subject of an inquiry by the Coroner. However, I found it one of the saddest funerals I have ever attended, because a 20-year old young man should not kill himself. It is not necessary. As a mother, his death affected me greatly, and I shared in the grief of his mother and grandmother and spent many hours with them. At the funeral, I realised that if there is one thing I really must achieve in my time as an MP it is to improve the mental health services and facilities in our country regions. This young man should not have died, and I believe that our society let him down. Although I am pleased with what we have achieved so far, we must put more money into the issue of mental health.

Some time ago, a school principal visited me who wanted to talk about the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. She said she was supposed to be teaching young primary schoolchildren to read and write and to educate them for the future. However, she said that what she was doing was spending the day holding these children together and teaching them to survive one day at a time. There just was not enough back-up through the CAMHS system to be able to work with these children, so we have to do something. We must have facilities and services. The ones we have are good, but they are not enough. As a state, I do not believe that we are rich enough to solve this problem, but it is essential that we must do more than we are doing, and we must prioritise. Young men and women such as Eddie must not be allowed to die in vain. As a government, we have an awesome responsibility, and I urge that this be addressed as one of the major issues in our term of government.

I congratulate Professor Lowitja O'Donoghue and the Reverend Tim Costello on their appointment as advisers to the AP lands. I was delighted by their appointment, because I believe that they will say it as it is and, if things are not happening, they will certainly kick butt. It is an important movement forward for the AP lands. I previously expressed my concern about the situation in the AP lands, so today I will not reopen old wounds. However, I look forward to working with the new executive after the elections on 3 October. Whoever the members are, I will put old wounds behind me, and I hope to work very well with the new executive. I believe that we need someone on the ground coordinating the funding and the services going into the lands. I know that at this point a task force is overseeing the lands, and I appreciate the work it is doing.

The AP Council is responsible for many of the services in the lands, but it does not have access to the decisions made by the various government departments and funding bodies. I believe what we need is an experienced, smart operator who can coordinate what is happening at a state and government level and who works hand in hand with the Anangu and particularly with the AP Council. I urge the task force and the Premier to look at this issue after the forthcoming AP election when the new executive is in place, because I think it is essential to our ability to get on and get things happening in those lands.

I also ask that funding allocations for the Outback Areas Community Development Trust be looked at. This organisation is a vital cog in the Outback region, and for some time I have had concerns about its limited capability to operate in such a huge geographical area. I believe that it receives approximately \$280 000 from the state government

and about \$1.2 million from the federal government to service the 33 communities in an area that covers some 80 per cent of the state. For example, Andamooka—a community of 500 people—operates on a budget of about \$64 000 a year, of which about \$34 000 comes from the Outback Areas Community Development Trust. The remainder has to come from fundraising, such as chook raffles and sausage sizzles. This is neither ineffective nor fair. This community has to run on this funding of \$64 000, which has to cover road maintenance and maintenance of its infrastructure, etc. It is very difficult for the Outback Areas Community Development Trust, because there is not much it can do with its limited funding. I believe this needs close examination, and I call for a review of the funding of the OACDT. More rationality should be applied so that communities in that area have the opportunity to do some of the things they need to do. They are very limited at the moment, because a small population has a limited fundraising ability, and infrastructure has just been going downhill over the years.

I listened to the words of the Leader of the Opposition today. He said that people were waking up to the government. That is a bit of a joke. I do not think that he has been reading the polls in the past few weeks. I am delighted to be a part of this government, which has put health, education and child welfare above all else. While I have some issues that I believe need addressing, I have to say that it is a much better view from this side of the house than it is from the other.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I thank the Governor for her speech, which was delivered by her deputy, Mr Bruno Kruminis. The speech once again drew our attention to the State Strategic Plan. This document and the issues it outlines also feature in the documentation for Viva SA, the rebadged Business Vision 2010, and also in information from the Economic Development Board, the Science and Research Council, the Social Inclusion Board, the Sustainability Round Table and the Business SA Manifesto, which are all looking at finding solutions (as the Chairman of Viva SA put it) to the state's economic plight. In great understatement, he also stated:

Over the past two years our state has become rather introspective. It is about time that the government started to do a few things or, at the very least, support those who do. I recently attended four of Viva SA's flagship initiative project groups—innovation, population, infrastructure and regional—and was concerned that, instead of building on what is already being done successfully, the government was once again going to try to reinvent the wheel, at great cost in terms of time and money.

Let us look at increasing the state's population; getting more immigrants into the regions, as opposed to the Adelaide metropolitan area; fitting potential migrants with jobs so that they go to work as soon as they step onto South Australian soil; filling vacancies in the regions for skilled and semi-skilled people; and lifting the quality of life for those who have lived in those areas all their lives, while also lifting the quality of life for families whose homelands have become noted for fear, oppression and deprivation.

That is a description of what is already being done by a volunteer organisation that has been quietly working in South Australia to fulfil all the above criteria. It is called the Zimbabwe Connection. Unfortunately, the organisation's success will also be the reason for its demise, because this volunteer group and registered charity cannot continue in its

present structure. The manager of the Zimbabwe Connection database, Jill Lambert, must also work for a living and, therefore, does not have enough time to put into the cause. Setting up a virtual private network to reduce her increasing load would cost in the vicinity of \$30 000 plus recurrent funding—money that the group does not have.

The group is doing what Premier Mike Rann has announced a number of times needs to be done, that is, to increase the population of South Australia. On Eyre Peninsula I have set my own goal to increase our population by 1 per cent in the next 12 months. That means about 220 voters, plus children. If we do not replace the population we have lost on Eyre Peninsula we are at risk of losing our health and education infrastructure.

The Zimbabwe Connection was founded in 2002. One of the chief instigators was Jill Lambert, who came to Australia more than 20 years ago. Mrs Lambert was a high profile media personality in Zimbabwe. She became well known as a television news reader and current affairs anchor as well as a presenter of classical music and other radio programs. In 1982 she came to Australia to commentate on the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane and, on behalf of Qantas, to conduct travel seminars around the country about the new destination of Zimbabwe. Back home she was reading the news one night with a man who had been one of Mugabe's propagandists during the guerilla war. When asked their vision for the future, the man replied, 'We want absolute power.' Later, Jill asked him to define what he meant by 'absolute power'. He said, 'When the people are on their knees begging for a handful of mealie meal', which is the staple diet, 'and you are the only one who can give it to them.'

Jill went home to her husband and proposed that they leave Zimbabwe, which they did in 1983. She was offered a job with ABC TV on *Nationwide* in Sydney but, as they were allowed to take the equivalent of only \$US800 out of Zimbabwe, Sydney was out of the question. They decided on Perth, because they felt very shell-shocked on arrival and had the offer of a house to sit for 17 weeks. Both had job offers and their daughter was in school. Then they came to Adelaide for Christmas with cousins and fell in love with the city. Jill said she walked on the North Adelaide golf course for three hours, plucking up the courage to redirect the container once again and unwind what had already been set up. 'We have never regretted it for an instant,' she said. In Adelaide, Jill took over as Director of the University of Adelaide's Radio 5UV. After five years at the station she formed her own company advising tourism operators on the importance of environmental sustainability in what they were doing, particularly in new tourism developments. The company has since expanded into incentive programs and events management.

She started the Zimbabwe Connection to assist Zimbabweans wanting to enter Australia but facing difficulties with qualification requirements. The catalyst was a friend who had everything taken from him in Zimbabwe and who was over 45 years old, which is the cut-off point for acceptance by Australian immigration. He was highly qualified in the desired field of agronomy and had two daughters 12 and 10 years of age. Jill found him a job at Clare and then she realised there were 6 000 Zimbabwean farmers and business people in the same boat. These were people whose skills were not recognised by the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs database, but wonderful people with huge experience who would prefer to live in the country

than in the city. Most of these increasingly desperate people thought the only way they could get into Australia was by buying a business, often quite unsuitable and beyond their experience anyway, let alone combined with coping with competitive Australian environments. These were good people who had lost almost everything once and were going under a second time as a result.

Additionally, these people tended to go for Queensland or Western Australia, and Jill felt we could get our share of them, especially as regional South Australia was in desperate need of their skills. She got a group of former Zimbabweans together and the Zimbabwe Connection was born. The organisation placed 68 families in Australia from 2002 to early this year and has placed considerably more since then. Forty-one families have come to South Australia. Those wanting to migrate are connected with people seeking skilled and semi-skilled workers. If they want to go ahead they are passed on to a migration agent or DIMIA.

Zimbabwe Connection makes the connection and assists families when they arrive, but does not do the work of migration agents or the Department of Immigration. The organisation's success comes from matching needs that are compatible. Black Zimbabwean families have been most disadvantaged by the Mugabe government and constitute 50 per cent of families coming to Australia. A report from the Zimbabwe Connection's first annual general meeting on 14 June 2003 reads:

For those with any connection to Zimbabwe the last few years have brought disbelief, despair and anger at the atrocities being perpetrated against our fellow men and women, black and white. Sadly, within the planning of despots, a calculated strategy is that the human psyche can only take so much before it starts to numb, to accept and blank it out. As desperation in Zimbabwe grew we become more concerned at how often emigrating families made rash and hasty business or other decisions that impacted adversely on successful settlement in Australia.

The Zimbabwe Connection was born and now operates nationally. We did not wish to become immigration or personnel placement agents. Yet our conviction was that to find good, compatible employment as soon as possible was a vital key to understanding the complexities of a new society—and that from this base better informed business or employment decisions could be taken in future. Together with carefully placed publicity we chose to work closely with a few key immigration and personnel placement agents, as well as with state skilled migration departments. Our role was to become that of a concerned relative or friend and this has assumed two components: connecting potential employers, largely in rural Australia, and Zimbabweans looking to immigrate; providing 'adopting' families for ex-Zimbabweans in Australia, to make useful suggestions before arrival about everything from weather to schooling, then assuming a mentoring role for a period once they arrive.

The result has been astonishing. In the first 10 months of operation the Zimbabwe Connection can claim to have been involved directly or indirectly in the following:

- over 60 jobs, share farming or joint venture offers from Australians in rural areas nationally, from dairies to broad acre cropping, animal management to agronomists, diesel mechanics or nurses to pharmacists and vets
- 86 Zimbabwe families on our register
- 23 matched job offers and acceptances, with visa applications in progress or completed and families settling, we believe more easily, into Australia
- heart-warming reactions from Australians—from cash donations, to offers to pay airfares for a needy family, to city units or farm houses on a temporary or longer term basis, and extraordinary distributions of food and clothing
- a regularly updated web site full of useful information and contacts.

The load is considerable—all done voluntarily within a non-profit making organisation. We need help to keep it going, or we will simply 'burn out'. We need new blood on the executive and in sub-committees—helpers to collect and distribute food and clothing—

and help with databasing and phone calls. Please think about it and if you can play a part anywhere in Australia, contact me by e-mail on jill@zimbabweconnection.com.

I have a passionate desire to build my electorate and serve my constituents. When I heard of the Zimbabwean Connection I contacted Jill, and our coming together has been mutually beneficial. I have battled with the problem of job vacancies—professional, skilled and unskilled—in my electorate. Most Australians who are looking for work do not want to go to the country and most migrants who come to Australia want to stick to the capital cities, especially Sydney. So, finding an organisation matching people who are willing to go to country South Australia where there are job vacancies was better than finding gold in my backyard.

Warren and Kim and their children Jonathon, then 15, and Kirsten, then 13, were the first family to come to Eyre Peninsula. Warren, a qualified diesel mechanic, was employed by Pringles Ag-Plus at Wudinna. Two more diesel mechanics, Kumar and Dave, and their families soon followed with one going to Wudinna and one to Cleve, both employed by Pringles Ag-Plus. The desperate need for mechanics was mentioned in an article in the *Eyre Peninsula Tribune* of 11 December 2003 when Ramsay Brothers general manager, Eddie Ward, said that his company needed four qualified farm machinery mechanics to overcome the shortage and was advertising in every major rural newspaper throughout Australia in an attempt to find them.

Some of you may well be aware of the joint federal and state government Regional Skilled Migration Scheme (RSMS). This initiative assists regional businesses fill skilled vacancies that they have been unable to fill from within Australia. RSMS has access to a worldwide database of people who have indicated a desire to migrate to Australia. This list, of course, includes Zimbabweans. So, what are the differences that make the Zimbabwean Connection so successful compared to other immigration services? Why not simply amalgamate the connection with, for instance, the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA), which is one of the suggestions that has recently been made?

First, some background about how the Zimbabwe Connection goes about its work, and I quote from the notes made by Jill in response to this suggestion:

1. Advising our applicants to use the DIMIA database:
 - a. We are already advising anyone likely to get in on a skilled migration visa in a 'wanted' category to apply for this—and how to do so.
 - b. The database is open to all states and territories to access information and a state can offer sponsorship (STNI) to people on the database. It does not mean they have a job to come to, but that they are likely to find a job once they get here.
 - c. We then liaise with Immigration SA to inform them of these people in advance and they get back to me, if appropriate, with an offer of STNI from South Australia. This information is passed on to the Zimbabwean family. The state looks after them very well, meeting them, accommodating them for a short while an endeavouring to help them find work. It is our experience that it takes people 3-4 months at the very least to find work and that during this time they are extremely anxious, stressed and frequently short of money—not easy when you have just come from an anxious and stressed situation. It is also our experience that almost all of those matched through the database will settle in Adelaide or in other capital cities.
 - d. I have looked at our recent records and it would indicate that approximately 40 per cent of the people we deal with would be eligible for the DIMIA database. STNI does not apply to anyone over 45 whereas we have skilled and experienced people in the 45-50 age group, all of whom have children, or they do not fit the identified skills need. Farming is not recognised as a skill and this has been a major focus of our work.

2. Why this [DIMIA database] is not working as effectively as it might for South Australian regions.

a. I have recently returned from a visit to Eyre Peninsula, where I was asked by the member for Flinders Ms Penfold, why we were having so much greater success than they were [that is DIMIA]. I was puzzled as well until I spoke to Peter Mitchell of the Eyre Regional Development Board. It appears:

I. Peter writes to everyone he can on the skills matching database for whom there might be a position on Eyre Peninsula, extolling the virtues of living on the Eyre and the work opportunities.

II. He gets few, if any, replies.

III. I cannot confirm, but I believe that he has not been able to place anyone on the Eyre as a result. Peter believes that this is because it is difficult for the Eyre Peninsula to compete with the capital cities or the better known regions of Australia, who are also writing to them.

IV. We placed four families onto the Eyre Peninsula within a period of nine months, and I expect to place another four or five families within the next few months if the Zimbabwe connection continues.

b. At a meeting held recently with the regional project officers (RPOs), Robyn Hansen and John Haren of Immigration SA, it became apparent that they have had no similar access to such a wide range of skilled people, any one of whom would be interested in coming to South Australia.

3. What is it that we are doing differently?

a. We are, in conjunction with the RPOs, identifying actual jobs which need filling in regional areas (we do not actively work to identify positions in Adelaide).

b. We send to each potential employer six or seven CVs—extending an invitation to them to ‘interview’ them by phone or email.

c. Once they are keen to go ahead and offer employment under DIMIA guidelines, we put them both in touch with a migration agent, or their local RPO, to process the visa.

d. Once the visa has been granted, we meet them at the airport, provide two nights accommodation with an ex-Zimbabwean family in Adelaide who will show them how to undergo all procedures and formalities required of them before arranging to send them out to their region.

e. The new migrants arrive to a job immediately which is more satisfactory and the Australian employers have been prepared to wait the few months it takes to get them here.

f. We work with our entire database to suggest they consider South Australia. Most migrants will opt to go instinctively to a State or Territory where they have friends, relatives or some support. Almost every application we get opt for Queensland or Western Australia because they know others there.

Of the list supplied in your original letter to Chris Geisler, only one family of five came to South Australia of their own volition—in other words, we have actively encouraged 138 people to become South Australians—and all, except one teacher, are based in one of the regions or have a regional focus to their work.

4. The hope for a future with a virtual private network installed.

a. Ex-Zimbabweans are highly motivated to help their fellow countrymen in the present situation, therefore those already in the regions are determined to identify positions which cannot be filled by Australians, but which might suit a Zimbabwean family.

b. We now have 3-4 ex Zimbabweans in each region (Eyre, Mid North, Southeast, Riverland) prepared to look after a handful of Zimbabweans CVs and to liaise with the RPOs in that region to fill positions which might be available.

c. Immigration SA will have access to our database of CVs and print off any they require.

In summary: I cannot see how we could achieve the same measure of effectiveness using the DIMIA database,

—DIMIA already takes every Zimbabwean who has the necessary skills or age requirements.

—Those on the skills matching database tend to go to the capital cities and we are in open competition with interstate.

—The larger number of our applicants are people who only just do not qualify, who are already (and would be) of enormous benefit to our country areas and who, because they are so desperate to get out of Zimbabwe, are only too delighted to go to a job in our country areas.

—The Zimbabwe Connection is unashamedly pro-South Australia and therefore all the people on our database are out of competition from other States (unless there is a specific request from them otherwise).

I believe what we are doing could serve as a model to fast track immigration to South Australia and meet Premier Rann’s targets for the future. But it cannot be done without this network.

It is pertinent here to mention that the Premier’s concern to increase the state’s population is a concern that is shared by others. He was reported in January this year as saying that he aimed to increase the state’s migration to 600 a year by 2013, and to double the skilled migration intake to 2 500 a year. The move coincides with an announcement by the Acting Prime Minister John Anderson and the federal Immigration Minister Amanda Vanstone of a new scheme to attract more migrants to regional areas across Australia. An editorial in *The Australian* on 4 February 2004 stated:

Boosting the population has been recognised for years as one of the prime requisites for ensuring continued economic growth for South Australia. The report of the Economic Development Board recommended last year that the government do everything it could to facilitate new arrivals. Only last week, Premier Mike Rann was talking about more business migration to reverse the population drain.

I suggest that the Premier need look no further than the Zimbabwe Connection. Here is an organisation that is doing everything that is required to lift the state’s population. I understand that the chairman of Zimbabwe Connection, Fraser Bell, and Jill, have approached the Premier to see if the organisation could be used as a trial for practical applications to his policy of population increase. Last month Jill thanked John Haren, Director of Immigration SA in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, for the pivotal role that he had played in advising how the Zimbabwe Connection could operate and for his unflinching and generous support; however, we are advised that the demise of the organisation was imminent if funding to develop the virtual private network could not be secured. The Zimbabwe Connection is a registered charity and Jill’s speaking circuit results in donations. Incoming Zimbabweans are asked for \$50 per family and a letter has been sent to all Australians who have employed Zimbabweans asking for donations. Jill herself bears all other costs, and the organisation has grown beyond expectations. Jill and her husband also started in a new country in mid life, therefore their resources are limited. The load needs to be shared, but this is impossible at the moment, because all of the information is on Jill’s computer.

The Zimbabwe Connection and its success have not gone unnoticed across Australia. Jill has been invited to speak to the Geelong Business Club and the Rotary District of Melbourne, while invitations have come from Swan Hill, Ballarat and Horsham on the subject of how to encourage southern Africans to take jobs in their areas. It would be a disgrace if this innovative enterprise moved interstate to benefit those states at the expense of South Australia.

The stories of the Zimbabweans who have successfully integrated into our society are heart warming. Keith and Bridget, who now live in Port Lincoln, left their home surrounded by a two-metre high barbed wire fence in Harare 20 years ago, when they decided that they were tired of the stress of living in a country beset with violence and corruption. Schooling, health and safety were issues that convinced them to make the hard decision to move. Speaking last year of their experiences, they said:

We sympathise so very much with friends who are still in Zimbabwe—many would choose to come to Australia but it is not easy to get sufficient ‘points’ to fulfil the immigration requirements. So many of those wishing to come to Australia have skills and talents which would be put to good use if only they could be given a chance. Zimbabweans are great people who are easily adaptable and who fit

in easily with the Australian lifestyle, language, sport and even humour.

This once prosperous bread basket of Africa has a strong agricultural and horticultural history which enables people to fit in well in regional South Australia. As Jill Lambert said:

Primarily due to the destruction of the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe, with its domino effect into all aspects of an economy now verging on bankruptcy, many Zimbabweans want to come to Australia, and are leaving behind their property and their homes with no compensation so they can get out while it is still possible. It is difficult for us to imagine how anyone is conducting a normal life over there—there is no fuel so you cannot, for instance, get your crop to point of sale; garages are closed because nobody can drive their vehicles in for service, aircraft cannot fly unless they have been able to fill up elsewhere. There are no banknotes and you cannot get your passport renewed because there is no paper. This is in addition to the fact that there is no bread, milk, butter, maize meal—the staple diet—or meat. It is a living nightmare.

There is a proverb that says, 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good.' South Australia can turn these horrific circumstances currently existing in Zimbabwe to our favour. The state government can take a pro-active role and ideally this should receive bipartisan support for the future benefit of South Australia. As a new session of parliament begins, we have an opportunity to work for the future of our state; a future that will be more productive, more compassionate, more vigorous and more tolerant, and a future that will lift this state economically.

The Zimbabwe Connection brought 144 new residents, many of whom were children, to the state in 18 months. It is seldom that a once sophisticated country simply gives away its skilled and experienced people. Australia and other countries have understood the opportunities this presents and have welcomed these shattered people with warmth and open arms. The worth of the Zimbabwe Connection in human and practical terms is immeasurable. I urge the Premier and all parliamentarians to find a way in which the Zimbabwe Connection can continue the great benefit it brings to South Australia, in particular, rural and regional South Australia. I support the motion.

Mrs HALL (Morialta): In my remarks today I pay tribute to the roles performed by the Governor, Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, and, indeed, the Lieutenant-Governor, Bruno Krumins, both of whom, it has been said on a number of occasions during this debate, are well-respected and admired for their contribution to the wider South Australian community. I thank them for the work they tirelessly perform across our state, and on behalf of our community. I believe that they are well recognised and greatly appreciated for the work that they do.

Over the past two weeks, many members have spoken during this Address in Reply debate and, as is so often the case, it has been criticised as a waste of time. It has regularly been described as boring, and it has, on occasions, been described as an ineffective use of our time. I would again like to place on the record my personal reflections on the opening ceremony and the 50th parliament of South Australia. As we know, in our state we have an opening of parliament every year. This contrasts with other states and the federal parliament, in particular. I very strongly support the need for reform in this instance. We should move to one opening of parliament and one Governor's speech, that being following the resumption of parliament following our state election. The occasion should outline the government program for the ensuing four years, and the objectives of how that program will be implemented.

I believe that this reform would raise the importance and prestige of the occasion. I believe it would greatly add to the importance of a four-year government program and, in particular, it would raise the importance of the content of the Governor's speech as it should be a comprehensive document to enable a degree of accountability that clearly does not exist at the moment. It would and could provide a reference point for the community and, dare I say, for the media.

My understanding is that the barriers that exist to making this reform are minimal, and that all it requires is the political will to do so. I would not presume to speak for the Treasurer, but my suspicion is that even he may find the prospect attractive as I am sure it would not only save time but it would also save money. It would outline the political and legislative agenda only once in a four-year period. Sure, we would still have all the pomp and ceremony that such an occasion would demand, and we would have all the symbolism that we currently have, but we would have this once—not four times. I seriously urge this parliament to consider this reform and take action so that, in future, we seriously consider the content of the government program and all that it says it is going to do. I look forward to the occasion when the Address in Reply debate takes place once in a four-year term.

About 2½ years ago this Premier took office amid considerable controversy, promises and compacts. He took over the responsibility of ensuring that South Australia grew economically strong; that our community would be protected; and that the government would act in an open and accountable fashion, essentially to be honest with the South Australian people. A new government always takes some time to find its feet, especially when it has been in opposition for a long time, therefore making that transition more difficult. But this government did not have to face the enormous fiscal stress and crisis in confidence that was left not only to a new government in 1993 but to the community of South Australia, caused by the State Bank disaster. It did not have an outdated public infrastructure, needing desperate renewal and upgrade, and it did not have to reinvigorate the tourism and export markets—like the previous Liberal government did.

In fact, South Australia at the time of the change of government was probably on the cusp of a long, sustained boom, thanks in part to the efforts of the previous Liberal government, and, over latter years, the very strong economic performance of a federal coalition government. This Labor government only had to keep the momentum going, stay the course and everything would have been okay. Instead, because of the historical fiscal demons that haunt the Premier and the Treasurer, they appear to be paralysed with a fear to actually make the decision that matches their rhetoric. They want that AAA rating that they lost in the early 1990s.

What achievements does this government have in its own right? The answer, in my view, is not very many at all, and history may yet show that Premier Rann and his political idol, the late premier Don Dunstan, may have much in common in terms of actual achievement as opposed to perceived benefit to our community. Many of the achievements claimed over the past two years are the end products of the previous Liberal government's policies and decisions; and I understand in a parliamentary democracy that is always going to happen. Even the Treasurer's much touted tax cuts in the budget were actually tax cuts agreed to under the GST formula and arrangements made back in the year 2000.

What we do know about this government is that it is very serious about spin and media headlines and grabs, but I

contend it is all about little action and a lot of noise. The Rann Labor way is to do little, make it seem much, then issue, re-issue, and reissue again media releases that are probably set on the automatic repeat button. I would contrast this against the federal government that has in the same approximate time delivered two tranches of real tax relief; created, and managed to grow, a very strong economy; kept interest rates at record lows; kept inflation at record lows; continued to provide record employment levels; and reduced federal Labor's massive debt. One always gets the feeling of *deja vu*, I have to say, with Labor governments and debt. Labor and crushing debt always seem to follow each other, whether state or federal.

The Howard federal government has an impressive record of action and achievement, especially in providing jobs. This contrasts dramatically with the way in which our graph lines are moving here in South Australia, particularly over the past 12 months; and, sadly, in my view they are moving the wrong way, that is, down. This house may recall the extraordinary comments of the deputy leader of the federal Labor Party, Jenny Macklin, when she said that people would be better off not working than working in casual or part-time employment. Under this government part-time employment has increased by 1 400 positions since last year, and I doubt that she would be able to convince those people and their families that they would be better off with no job. Full-time jobs, however, have dropped by a net quantity of 5 800 in the past 12 months. Men have lost 4 000 jobs and women have lost 1 800 jobs. Compared with the surging jobs market in the rest of the country, the sad fact that South Australia has recorded losses is a damning indictment of this government, but it does say a lot about the policy this government appears to be adopting towards economic management.

As the Leader of the Opposition has said on a number of occasions—and again this afternoon—Labor (and this Labor government in particular) do not seem to understand the difference between an annual budget and a state economy. They are two separate entities. They have much in common but they have to be managed differently, yet this government would have us believe that we are now doing as good as it gets. What should we expect from a government that signs a pledge card which it continues to airbrush from its conscience now it is in office? We have all heard of *The Boulevard of Broken Dreams*. Well, I contend that this is the government of broken promises. The Premier pledged no new taxes, yet we now have the River Murray tax; no new charges, when we now have new levies and fees, which all increase at rates higher than the CPI; and of course we have the highest ever revenue from taxation in our state's history.

The GST, which the Premier and his party opposed, will generate nearly one billion dollars alone this year, yet the government cannot see fit to give some of that money back in the way of increased spending on police or hospitals, etc. Neither does it seek to ease the burden on the rental market by giving property tax relief. This year alone—and over the ensuing four-year period—Treasurer Foley has an unallocated \$244 million, yet he continues to wear his Scrooge title and descriptor as a badge of honour.

Take, for example, bed and breakfast operators. In a tourism market such as that which exists in South Australia, bed and breakfast operators play a pivotal role, yet they are being squeezed out by this government and this Treasurer. Even though the vast majority may be private residents who would normally be exempt from such a land tax, because they are B&B operators they are being taxed on the whole

property even though they may only use up to 20 per cent of it for commercial purposes. Despite numerous questions and submissions for relief and an acknowledgment by the Treasurer that our B&B operators have a genuine case for relief, they are still waiting. At least one of the more successful and award-winning B&B properties has been put on the market because the operators cannot afford the crippling property taxes that have been imposed by this government, despite its pre-March 2002 promise. Relief should be provided. My view is that it must be provided, especially when you consider the windfall money that is pouring into our state treasury coffers.

In the wider economy, people (especially our young people) are struggling to find affordable housing and, despite loud appeals, little appears to be being done. As the Leader of the Opposition said again earlier this afternoon, this government has a habit of shooting the messenger, especially when the messenger delivers a message that they do not want to hear. The Parole Board, as we all know, is a classic example of this. South Australia's Labor government appears to have a unique way of dealing with issues that reflect badly upon it. If shooting the messenger does not work—and that is tried often—they then try to ignore them. Even when they are asked in parliament about serious matters of public concern and safety, they often refuse to give a direct answer. Answers to correspondence from members of parliament are at best tardy, and ministers regularly have to enter the chamber to correct the record because they got it wrong. I suppose this is strangely comforting in one way because the government appears to have put up a wire fence around the Public Service making it extremely difficult for an MP (or the office of an MP) to have access to crucial information on legislation, particularly and importantly when seeking assistance for their constituents. The rule is that you must go through the minister's office. That is fine if you get a response.

Another issue which I know some of my colleagues have already discussed is the community's concern about the draconian Fair Work Bill which I understand will be brought in during this session. Many others have said that this bill will represent the worst excesses of the union movement and the Labor Party's unholy pact. It is, without doubt, anti-employer and anti-business and, therefore, that equates to anti-jobs, because it will allow the unions unrestricted access to work sites even when there are no union members. It will allow government inspectors to make inspections even when there are no complaints and, if an employee has not been complying with rehabilitation regulations, the employer will not be able to terminate their employment. Employers will be forced to re-employ workers in many cases. Casuals will be able to claim unfair dismissal, even though they are engaged specifically for a set period, as long as, in their view, there was a reasonable expectation that work could continue. Volunteers will be brought under the jurisdiction of the IRC. Also, the IRC would be able to alter or even reinstate a contract and to do so after EBAs, even after they have been agreed to. This is just a quick snapshot of the planned economic and, in my view, industrial insanity.

Another issue that the government has always shied away from is the inquiry into sexual abuse and child protection and, for some reason, the government was reluctant to initiate the inquiry. But, when it was eventually dragged to the table and forced to establish the inquiry, the commitments made about appointing interstate judges and impartial people were quickly broken—another case of this government's broken

promises. Even though the protection of our children is surely one of the most fundamental things a human being (let alone a government) can do, the Rann government has ridiculed a number of the victims who have come forward.

When reading a governor's speech, I always try to find a couple of the initiatives that I support, and the report on the Every Chance for Every Child program is one that appears to be successful. The Governor's speech reports that it is a great success, with a high level of participation and interest; and it is a program, as we know, that seeks to ensure that mothers and families are provided with effective support. I also understand that a culturally appropriate model has been developed for indigenous families and that, already, there is a 28 per cent interest in enrolment in this program.

I sincerely hope this initiative works well and, at this stage, am very happy to support it, but I do ask the government, in a serious and genuine way, whether it intends to develop other culturally appropriate models that incorporate diverse linguistic and cultural issues for other growth demographics. As we all would be aware, we are seeing significant increases in the Sudanese and Middle Eastern communities in our state, as well as the other predicted increases from our important and traditional migration sources such as Europe. I believe it is important that, if this program is as successful as it appears it may be and if the one specially designed for our indigenous family works, it would be a superb initiative for the government to look at developing other appropriate models for these particular communities to which I refer.

I now turn to several specific areas of importance to me in my capacity as shadow minister, and I start with the tourism industry. As we know, tourism is widely acknowledged as a very important economic generator for South Australia. We know that it employs about 44 000 people, which equates to 36 000 full-time workers. It accounts for approximately 10 per cent of the state's growth, and the economic value over the last several years has been recorded at \$3.4 million on an annual basis.

However, its future success means that a number of ingredients are needed for the tourism, travel and hospitality industries to continue to grow and develop. Tourism numbers, as we know, are crucial for this ongoing growth and benefits that will inevitably flow. We have three particular segments—that is, intrastate and interstate visitors that both make up the domestic market, and we have the international visitors. We also acknowledge that tourism nights are vital. However, the tourism industry and its many partners have had to endure a number of shocks and challenges over a number of decades, and the last three years, in particular, have been difficult—we have had September 11, the Ansett collapse, the SARS epidemic, the Bali bombing and the fluctuating Australian dollar.

All states and territories have had to deal with these factors, therefore, why is there such concern across this state about this important industry sector? We have enjoyed some success, particularly with the Secrets campaign—a Liberal initiative of which I am extremely proud. It is a campaign that, undeniably, has provided a safety net and a foundation upon which to build during the difficult time post September 11. However, the future is causing current concern to significant sectors of our industry stakeholders.

No matter what the interpretation is, no matter what cherry-picking is done, the statistics clearly show that international visitor numbers in South Australia are down; yet, across Australia they have increased. We have South

Australian internationals down yet Australia-wide they are up. The Secrets campaign is not, and never was, designed to attract international visitors. The current government campaign to promote South Australia as a destination for domestic tourism and using the Linger Longer theme may be providing success at the moment in the domestic market, but, no matter how many domestic visitors 'linger longer', the reality and serious concern is that this state desperately needs more visitors internationally. We have to increase our numbers, volume and percentage of internationals and, if this government fails to address this crucial issue, the fact is our industry will not grow, indeed, it cannot grow. The implications of this failure will flow through into our economy and cause huge problems.

The current appalling decrease in this vital mix of our industry is to the shame of this government. I have said in previous speeches that one claim to fame that the Premier never wants to talk about is that, when he was the tourism minister, our internationals sank to below 300 000. Well, guess what? Under this government, again, and under his leadership, history has repeated itself. Our internationals are currently standing at a dismal 292 300, down more than 50 000 in three years. The current numbers are not good enough and urgent priority must be given in future campaign activities and budget support to start the climb up. What is it about Labor governments? Why do they not understand that the tourism industry has got to be supported with extraordinary resources. It is an industry that is so important and provides so many benefits to the wider South Australian community from the heart of our capital city to the furthest corners of our state borders.

World Tourism Day is celebrated on 27 September, less than one week away. What are we doing, as a state, to mark this significant date? What are we doing to promote our state in our key and emerging markets to get more internationals to South Australia? I am informed that the answer is nothing special. For example, what does this government think about federal Labor policy and the party's latest pronouncement of an intention to rip more dollars out of the industry? If Latham's Labor policy was ever implemented—and I trust South Australians will do their bit to ensure that does not happen—Labor will make Australia one of the top three highest departure tax countries in the world. Labor wants to raise our departure tax by more than 30 per cent, raising it \$12 to \$50, once again punishing travellers—not just international travellers, but all Australians who travel outside this country. Over a period of four years, estimates show that more than \$126 million will be taken out of the tourism industry.

Many of our own tourism operators across the state now have a tale of woe. The general view is that tourism is, at best, patchy or spiky, as the new word describes the current environment. As the tourism recovery continues across our nation, South Australia must be part of the international numbers recovery and the benefits that will flow from that. Like previous speakers, I was disappointed by the lack of content in the Lieutenant-Governor's speech. The government program as it relates to tourism took up just 10 lines, four of which referred to the new direct Qantas Adelaide-Auckland flights due to commence in December. It is a welcome decision by Qantas and, potentially, of enormous significance and benefit to our state.

As I have said very many times before, although tourism is an industry with great potential, there are strongly held views about how to reach and share in its benefits. As

mentioned, the new direct flights to New Zealand (which is a very important market for South Australia) is a good decision by Qantas, but, in addition, another opportunity I trust the government and the tourism commission are working and negotiating for is to share the interest that other international carriers have in our country and our state in particular. I hope in the future that we have Emirates, Gulf Air and, in particular, SriLankan Airlines coming into our state. I understand that currently SriLankan Airlines is evaluating flights to Australia as part of its expansion plans. I understand direct flights under active consideration include Colombo to Sydney and Colombo to Melbourne, and possibly commencing as early as January next year.

South African Airways with their Sydney flights through from December this year to the end of January next year is another opportunity. The opportunities of China continue to grow, but they are well recognised. I have spoken about the opportunities in India before and I believe that they have to be pursued, and I express my disappointment that Adelaide is not part of the India tourism roadshow currently moving across this country, accepting that it is moving across Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney and Auckland over the next couple of weeks. The potential market of India is a prize for any state tourism industry that has done its groundwork well in advance, and I trust the government will make this a priority in its future planning. Malaysian Airlines, Singapore, Garuda and Qantas international flights continue to serve our state with high capacity loadings. However, there are so many other opportunities for us to be actively supporting what South Australia has to offer, and this Labor government must take advantage of these opportunities. As we know, Australia is constantly one of the top two preferred destinations in international travel, despite our being long haul by definition.

There are so many other opportunities that one could talk about in the tourism industry; however, I would like to briefly touch on another one of the areas of my responsibility and that is women. I do consider it a privilege to be the opposition shadow minister for the status of women, and I take this opportunity during this debate to pay tribute to the first woman who was elected to the commonwealth parliament in the House of Representatives in 1943, because next week marks the 60th anniversary of her maiden speech, and I speak of Dame Enid Lyons. She served in the federal parliament from August 1943 until March 1951, and she was the first woman ever to serve in a federal cabinet. She was an extraordinary woman, mother of 12 children and wife of a former Tasmanian minister, premier and later prime minister. She was a very strong advocate for women, children and their families. She passionately believed in the need for women to take their place in public life, especially in parliament, and her list of achievements for raising the status of women is impressive, particularly when you reflect on the years she served as a parliamentarian and on the issues of her time.

I think it is appropriate to pay tribute to our early women parliamentary pioneers, because South Australia has an impressive record for and with women, and especially I would say I am proud of my party. With the Hon. Joyce Steele, our first woman in this chamber, looking down at us daily, reflecting on the tapestries and what they symbolise, it should cause us to reflect not only on the progress that has been made but on what still must be achieved. Sadly, the small proportion of women in the senior levels of the public and corporate sector remains low and slow, and despite the rhetoric, the commitment and often the very best intentions

of all levels of government and the corporate sector, that continues.

The ongoing issue of domestic violence, in my view, remains one of the most critical issues on the national agenda, both in the wider community and within our indigenous and multicultural communities. The statistics continue to horrify and, despite an increased public awareness and political focus supported by a range of programs and millions of dollars, collectively we still have a long way to go to address this horrifying problem.

I want to make reference to some of the issues that are of particular concern to the electorate and constituents of Morialta. One of the regular questions that I am constantly asked relates to the future of the Magill Youth Training Centre, which has been promised and reviewed, and options have been provided, but we are still awaiting a decision. The Hill Face Zone moratorium and future land use continues to create concern throughout the hills area, and the fear of what policy decisions this government may or may not make and how they will affect the livelihood of families continues to be a huge issue. The other issues that constantly come to my office for discussion relate to law and order: hoon driving, breaking and entering and the important role of our police in South Australia.

[Sitting suspended from 5.56 to 7.30 p.m.]

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): I rise to support the Address in Reply to the Governor's speech in opening the Fourth Session of the Fiftieth Parliament. I commend the Governor, Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, for her dedication and commitment to the people of our state; and I acknowledge the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr Bruno Krumins, who presented the Governor's speech in Her Excellency's absence. The government's plans for the next year and beyond did not contain any surprises or new and innovative plans or strategies to continue to address either the needs of South Australians or the state, whether economically, structurally or socially. It was a rehash of previous programs and reviews of others.

While this government reaps in hundreds of millions of dollars from property values and GST collections there is no mention of relief in electricity or gas pricing and, certainly, no thought of relief for the South Australian constituency who continue to be ripped off by a government blinded to the financial suffering it is causing by the glow of glittering gold in its Treasury coffers. There was very little in the speech to parliament that addressed law and order issues in the state, but I would like now to address a matter that has caused considerable anxiety within the north-eastern community. On 1 June I asked a question of the Minister for Police relating to information I had received, which clearly showed a shortfall of some 40 police personnel at Holden Hill's local service area.

Some time later the police minister sent me a written response to the question. In asking my question of the minister, I had specifically stated that the authorised establishment for Holden Hill was 313.5 full-time equivalents. The information that I had received showed that Holden Hill was 39.9 staff members under establishment. The answer I received from the minister showed a total establishment figure of 291 full-time equivalents and 21 staff members absent. It is unfortunate that ministers of the government, not satisfied with playing around with the truth in their media

releases, also tend to play around with the truth in their answers to this parliament.

The minister's answer to my question was not in itself untruthful, but the manner in which it was presented did not address the whole truth. You see, the authorised establishment upon which I base my question is the number of sworn and unsworn staff members designated appropriate to operate and manage a particular local service area. The minister's reply addressed only the number of sworn staff members in the establishment figures, completely ignoring the unsworn staff members that make up the authorised establishment figures. Therefore, the minister could proclaim a fewer number of staff members absent—a shortfall of 27 members and not the 39.9 that I had claimed.

The minister's answer was therefore false, as he chose to ignore the whole staffing requirements of this local service area, which include sworn and unsworn staff members. I will return to the issue of police resourcing a little later in my contribution. However, from humble questions greater issues arise and, once the Messenger Press in the north-east highlighted the shortfall of police at Holden Hill, I started to receive an amazing number of calls from people throughout the north-eastern community—people who were advising me of certain circumstances relating to criminal activity of which, I must admit, I had no prior knowledge.

Initially, I took the usual notes (we all do as members of parliament when people call to relate their stories to us), not sure what was fact or fiction. I was astounded to learn the truth of the claims being made. People were prepared to discuss the issues but not publicly make the claims they were making to me. They made the point again and again that they were fearful of retaliation should their circumstances, once aired in the public arena, identify them to the people they feared.

I also learned that, almost a year prior to my receiving this information, police were on the ground investigating gang member activity. I found myself speaking to the same people to whom police had spoken during that period. From my 5½ years as a minister in the previous government, I was fully aware that, if police were gathering intelligence on an issue, that information would be part of a report routinely presented to the officer in charge of that investigation. This meant that all the allegations being made to me were known to the police.

At the end of July, I brought this matter to public attention and called for a police task force to deal with the growing problem of teenage gangs in the north-eastern suburbs. I was totally alarmed at the reports of groups of youths involved in criminal activities, involving drugs and intimidation, allegedly linked to outlaw motorcycle groups. Much of the drug dealing was conducted in the vicinity of schools. I was told of students so scared of these groups of young thugs that they walked miles out of their way, rather than walk past the areas controlled by these gangs.

I now had information that at least six separate gangs were operating in the area; that up to 100 teenagers and young adults might be involved; and that one of the gangs might even be linked to an interstate group. This was also at about the same time as the Royal District Nursing Service buildings were vandalised and graffitied. The calls came in again, and people told me that the tags on the buildings were linked to one of these gangs which had been known to police for some time. In fact, the police did make an arrest shortly after this incident.

I was told that each gang appeared to have its own criminal characteristics, such as graffiti, vandalism, dealing drugs to other young teenagers and bashing and robbing school students. Others specialised in motor vehicle theft, assaults and break and enter crimes. If that was not startling enough information to concern every member of this parliament, I was also informed that those dealing drugs were not necessarily dealing in the now almost old-fashioned cannabis: we were talking about ecstasy and amphetamines. More importantly, we were not talking about some Third World country, where drugs and intimidation are part of daily life. These are normal everyday Adelaide suburbs and normal everyday Adelaide teenagers.

For the first two weeks that these and other related matters were discussed publicly and calls made for this government to take action, neither the Premier nor the police minister responded, nor to this date has the police minister answered my emails on this subject. I would have thought that even rumours, let alone facts, of such disturbing crimes would be enough to prompt this Labor government to back up its tough on crime and 'Let's have a Drugs Summit' rhetoric. At the two-week mark of the public discussion and with no response, I threw out the challenge on radio that two options were left to government on this issue: first, the government come out and say that these are unsubstantiated allegations that do not exist and do not require attention or, secondly, it say, 'Yes, we are aware of it. We are putting a task force into place. We are going to look at this issue. We are going to let the community know.' If all the allegations I was hearing were true, we were giving young gangs immunity to continue to propagate their criminal activities.

Neither the police nor the government contradicted any of the information I put forth on alleged gangs in the north-eastern suburbs, but then again no authority had confirmed those allegations. It took another two weeks for those acknowledgments to be made. This took place when I met with senior police officers from the Commissioner's office, who acknowledged that five gangs in the North-East had been identified; that their members were known to police; that Operation Impact would provide tactical response; and that a police liaison officer would be allocated to work with youth in the area.

After the police minister's statement to the house last week, the allocation of one police officer has been increased to two youth liaison officers. I was given assurances that operational management would be reassessed after our discussions to provide tactical response to the issues I had raised. The Deputy Commissioner indicated his support to take into account the issue, whether perceived or otherwise, when the public were expressing concern about the lack of police presence in the north-eastern suburbs. The Deputy Commissioner also commented on a proposal I put recently to Superintendent Killmier of Holden Hill and said that there was merit in discussing the need to establish a broader community forum involving police, councils and the range of organisations impacted by youth activity. Where was the government's police minister at this time? Nowhere to be seen until 24 August.

Earlier in this debate I spoke about the difficulty in getting people to speak out publicly because of their fear of retribution and intimidation by gang members. On 24 August I was contacted by a member of a family, who most courageously gave me permission to outline certain vicious and unwarranted circumstances which now affect their life and which have placed them in constant danger and have caused them to fear

for their children's safety. The story is this. Several months ago, one of their teenage children was an eyewitness to the serious assault and bashing of an adult male when a gang of young thugs gatecrashed a teenage party. Details of the assault were provided by the family to the police in an unsworn statement.

Some three months later (which is only a few weeks ago now), the family received a telephone call from a member of the gang, who let them know that they knew the family and their address. Since that time the family has lived in constant fear, because they know what this gang is capable of. The teenage youth from this family went to pick up a friend at a major shopping centre in the area a week after this telephone call had been made. At the shopping centre, 15 gang members were waiting for him with bats and poles. He avoided them and continued to drive to the end of the car park, where another car of gang members pulled out in front of him to cut him off. The teenage boy, in a high state of distress, as you can imagine, manoeuvred around the car and around the back of the centre onto the exit road to find that the gang members were lined up across the road to block his exit. He continued driving through without further incident and went to a nearby friend's home for safety, where his father collected him and took him to the Tea Tree Gully Police Station to report the incident.

That same evening, gang members drove past the family home several times. Police were called and remained outside the home for most of the night. Police also provided panic buttons for the household, recognising the seriousness of the situation. The family then hired a security guard to position himself outside their home and upgraded their home security. They live in daily fear for their safety.

The day before I made this story public, another incident of intimidation against a member of this family took place. Another teenage son who was leaving school was verbally abused by a gang member, who told the young boy that, should his family go to court, they would make sure the family would be sorry. Within the following week, the family took the decision that the mother and her sons would travel interstate for an indefinite period of time, because they did not feel that the family could be protected sufficiently were they to remain in their home, which was known to gang members.

This is a story that brought the police minister out of hiding and out of this government's mode of denial that gangs really were a problem in the north-east. That was a month after these issues were raised. That was followed the very next day, 25 August, by a press release from the Superintendent of Police at Holden Hill. The press release states in part:

The police have previous knowledge of five groups that are alleged to have been involved in criminal activity. The community can be reassured that police from the Holden Hill LSA are working together with police from other LSAs, Mounted Operations Unit, STAR Group, Northern Traffic Motorcycles and Transit Police to investigate and reduce the number of offences allegedly committed by members of these groups.

The release goes on to state that one operation had netted 17 arrests and 173 reports and an increase in police intelligence in relation to the groups—the word 'groups' was used instead of 'gangs'. There was one other disturbing piece of information in the press release, which stated:

Since January 2004, 13 recidivist offenders have been arrested or reported 46 times.

The public debate, after hearing the content of this press release, escalated to discuss the problems of recidivist offenders, bail breaching and other related issues.

The Premier and the police minister, by their absence on these matters for just over a month, have really become quite superfluous to this entire matter. So, I do not necessarily want to waste much more time on either of them, other than to put them on notice that the lack of police resources is a major issue. Lack of police presence in the community is a major issue. No response to significant issues, such as gangs operating among us and our families, is a major issue. Resourcing police appropriately is a major issue. Breaching bail is a major issue. Recidivist offenders is a major issue. Intimidation and threats of violence to a witness to a criminal offence is a major issue. Dealing illicit drugs to teenagers is a major issue.

To conclude this unfortunate saga that I want to put on record tonight, on 31 August the Police Commissioner was interviewed on ABC Radio. He was asked by David Bevan what was going on at Golden Grove, and I quote the following for the parliamentary record. The Police Commissioner in answer to that question said:

Well, there are a few problems out there at the moment. We have a number of groups of young people who are causing particular problems. I might also say we have some operations in place, have had in place for several months. Twenty-seven of these young people have been either arrested or reported for criminal offences. Over 150 expiation notices have been issued for vehicle offences of some type. There's a lot happening. They are causing a fair bit of concern for both us and the community.

Abraham asked the question:

How many of them are the same kids going round and round, hop in a car, smash a few windows, back in court, get off with a slap on the wrist, back out again?

The commissioner said:

Well, there is a bit of a merry-go-round with court, of course, but there are about five main groups out there. They have different origins and different sorts of things that bind them together. They are engaged in gate crashing parties, assaulting people and intimidating witnesses, intimidating people as part of what they either get their kicks off on or tactics to avoid apprehension by the police. We just need the community, particularly victims, to provide support to us, information to go to court. If we don't get all of that there's a limit to what we can do.

Further on in the discussion Bevan asked:

That brings me to the next point. If you know who these kids are, do you have all of the powers you need to go in adequately and deal with them?

The Police Commissioner stated:

About 30 or 40 years ago things were put into place—maybe a little bit more direct and physical was the way they handled things in the past. We can't do that nowadays. The law requires police to operate within certain parameters. Basically we can only work on identifying people for committing criminal offences and charging them, taking them to the court. We operate nowadays on a great deal more intelligence than we used to. We do know who the core offenders and the core people in these groups are. We do target them, we are taking action and we are charging people.

Then Bevan asked:

The situation at Golden Grove and Tea Tree Plaza seems to me to be worse than the situation we had late last year at Woodcroft. Is that a fair thing to say?

The Police Commissioner answered:

I think that's probably a fair thing to say. Let me say, too, that these groups don't necessarily confine their activities to the Golden Grove area. Some of them come into Rundle Mall and Gouger Street, other places as well. It's how you deal with young people overall.

The discussion continued until a caller called Robyn made the statement:

Lots of parents with young adults committing these kinds of crime would be beside themselves with worry and fear.

The commissioner said:

I agree with you: they should be concerned. Unfortunately, it seems some of them aren't as responsible as parents as the general community. In some of these groups out north I know that. Some of them are the sons of people who are in motorcycle gangs. You can perhaps work that one out. Yes, it is a problem: responsible parents would be worried. Maybe some of the parents just don't know what their children are up to and they ought to make inquiries to find out.

The state government needs to ensure that resources are provided to continue an ongoing police tactical presence to combat the problem of youth gangs in the north-eastern suburbs. This government and its minister has been in denial about the seriousness of the problem involving gangs, drugs, violence and graffiti. Unless the government provides the necessary resources to crack down hard on youth gangs, it will allow these gangs to terrorise the community with impunity. The Commissioner of Police has acknowledged the existence of some five gangs, with links to family members of bikie gangs.

He has also acknowledged that the situation in the Golden Grove and Tea Tree Gully areas is more serious than the teen gang problems in the southern suburbs last year. People in the Golden Grove and Tea Tree Gully communities want a greater police presence in the face of this alarming problem, which I can only suggest at times resembles a B grade movie scene rather than Adelaide suburbia. Anything less than a maximum concerted effort by the government provides anonymity to these young criminals and only gives them confidence to create havoc.

Of course, we were pleased to be able to get the government to acknowledge this significant problem; however, it is vitally important that the government realises that the fight has only just begun. The ministerial statements in this place recently are certainly not the end of the situation nor are they the solution to the problem that is still there. But full marks should go to our police, who are certainly doing a fantastic job in the face of drastic underfunding from a state government that refuses to back its 'tough on law and order' rhetoric with adequate resources. These teenage gangs must not continue to roam the north-eastern community unhindered whilst law-abiding families live in constant fear.

Before I move from this subject I also take a, perhaps, unprecedented step for me and acknowledge some of the radio commentators at the time. I refer to Leon Byner for his compassion on what was a serious matter and for allowing time on his talkback show to air these issues; David Bevan and Matt Abraham for asking the hard questions and getting answers; and certainly Jeremy Cordeaux for his interest, and I wish him a most enjoyable retirement.

There is not a great deal of time left in this debate so I would like to move on to a couple of other issues of concern. The Local Government Association has recently announced that it will conduct a review into the council rating system. The Minister for Local Government—who has remained quite disinterested in most council matters, let alone the rating issue—is still sticking to the line that council has sole responsibility for its decisions and the state government will not interfere in any of those decisions. However, on the first day of the parliamentary session the minister announced that he would, in fact, do something. I say do something because the announcement was beautifully crafted in bureaucratic 'wordspeak', which gave the perception that, when the minister has finished considering and believing in a range of options, something may, might or could be done. However, no one is really any the wiser about what it is he might do. I

will allow my constituents the opportunity to decipher the 'wordspeak' for themselves and seek their interpretation as I quote the Minister for Local Government and his words to this parliament, as follows:

My package will include, but will not be limited to, requiring councils to fully understand the impacts across their communities of movements in property valuations, and to consider both existing rating options and additional flexibility provisions to soften the impact, particularly on those with low and fixed incomes. In particular, I intend to consider the option of including a limit on the increases paid by any individual. I will also be considering the use of fixed charges or differential rates, and rating based on rolling average valuations. I believe councils would benefit from a system of formal, comprehensive and transparent consultation with their communities about the proposed rating and budgeting decisions, and by the development and implementation of improved strategies and forward financial plans.

I leave it up to all who read it to make their own interpretation of that interesting little paragraph.

The LGA wrote to members of parliament enclosing a survey seeking input from parliamentarians on the numbers of constituents who had complained about high and increasingly unfair council rates. They also asked for the private details of ratepayers such as name, address and contact number. I have yet to advise them that, due to privacy laws, I will not be passing the information on unless requested to do so by my constituents. However, it is also interesting to note that the letter suggested that some MPs had been contacted to ascertain the number of complainants who may have reported their concerns about current rating to them, and that the MPs had advised that they had either not received any calls or that only a few calls were received.

I do not feel at all surprised that the finding of the LGA, in its ring around to MPs, produced that result; however, I would feel concerned if the LGA were to believe that the result of their contact with MPs was a valid indication of the level of concern amongst ratepayers in our communities. I say this because I am aware that there is a great deal of anger amongst ratepayers, not only about the ever-increasing council rate charges but also about the component charges aligned with water, sewerage and the emergency services levy. I can make this statement as contact with my constituents leaves me in no doubt about how serious these matters are to them. I sent out a survey form seeking opinion on a range of issues in correspondence to constituents.

I have recently received some 70 responses from about 200 letters sent, and I am left in no doubt where the ratepayers in my electorate believe their priority concerns lie: the major response of the majority of returns clearly states property values and council rates. The Labor government may also be interested to know that the majority of respondents to my survey identified themselves as Labor or swinging voters. So, perhaps the government should take that into consideration when it is either thinking about doing something or believing it might do something.

It is also pertinent to note that pensioners and self-funded retirees were ignored in the Labor government's allegedly new plan into the future that we heard on the opening day of this session of parliament. They were ignored in the budget brought down for the 2004-05 year. The government failed to increase concessions but did not fail to boost charges across the board by nearly 4 per cent. Their council and water and sewerage rates have increased sharply, but their concessions have not. Their car registration and public transport costs have risen, but their motor vehicle concessions have not. In some cases, self-funded retirees will be faced with a

huge impost of land tax and, in many more cases, self-funded retirees who depend on rental homes for their income will not see any land tax relief, despite the Labor government's massive windfalls.

The other aspect of a government which continues to pursue elevated tax levels greater than at any time in the history of the state is the question of how long our community can sustain these imposts on the hip pockets of residents. It is my view that the present grab for any dollar this government can possibly garnish will be unsustainable in the short term and a disaster for the economy in the longer term. We are seeing resultant economic factors creating trends which cost jobs, forces rents upwards, and which affect retail spending and investment.

Last year, property taxes pulled in more than \$1 billion for the government and were \$263 million higher than budget expectations. The unbelievably high land tax grab could have been used for further building, employment, retail sales, holidays, entertainment and recreation, and put into a range of other investments, all of which create jobs. Take that money out of the community and into a holding pattern in government coffers and we lose jobs.

The government used its usual good news spin to announce concessions, for example, for first-time buyers and payroll taxes for businesses. The stamp duty concession amounted to \$792 on a \$250 000 house. Compare that with other states and we have \$8 000 less than that offered in New South Wales, \$7 000 less than Canberra and \$5000 less than in Victoria and Western Australia. In relation to concessions on payroll tax, there is no relief for small business when the business community will pay an extra \$8 million in payroll tax. In addition to the soaring property tax receipts, the forward estimates in the budget papers show that the Rann government will receive an alleged surprise of some \$757 million in the form of a GST bonus.

This government has not played fair with the people of this state. It has grabbed dollars by cutting funds to crime prevention programs and to disabled and disadvantaged groups across the state; it has deferred major infrastructure projects which would have produced substantial employment if they had gone ahead; and it has cut funds from health, hospitals and education areas, which this government promised the people of the state would be quarantined from funding cuts. Is it any wonder that the government cannot keep its promise about quarantining funding cuts in the hospital and education areas and that its great promise to reduce electricity prices and other energy costs was also just a fabrication? It seems to be a principal policy of this government that the bigger the fabrication the greater the chance the government has of people believing its rhetoric.

There are only a couple of minutes left in this address. I would have liked to deal with concerns which were raised in a document entitled 'Powering Poverty' which was sent out to all members of parliament recently. It is a report on the impact of the 2002-03 electricity price rises on a selected 12 low-income households in South Australia. It was prepared by the Western Region Energy Action Group and was funded through the Small Grants Program of the Essential Services Commission of SA. The findings of this report show just how outrageous this government is in terms of its ignoring the immense financial disadvantages it places on people in our community, particularly those who are already disadvantaged.

Those who live just above the poverty line; those with families; those with disabilities—the whole range of socio-economic low income earners are facing massive increases

that well and truly outweigh any relevant income that comes into their household when this paper shows that some 43 per cent is the cost, the risen cost, at this time of electricity prices. I am quite sure that members of parliament can understand the relevant financials when the income of people at this level certainly does not match the 43 per cent increase in the cost of electricity to these people.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): As minister, this is the first time that I have used the Address in Reply to make some comments and I want to do so in particular about some matters in my electorate. Before I do that, I wish to acknowledge the fine work done in our community by our Governor. I agree with the comments made by the previous speaker in relation to the very gracious way that the Governor fulfils her duty in our community, and I think she is a much loved and very honourable person and we are all very proud of the role that she plays. I also want to acknowledge the work done by the Lieutenant-Governor, particularly as he delivered the Governor's speech on behalf of the government this year, and it is in response to his address, a very fine speech I might add, outlining the initiatives that the government is going to take over the next 12 months or so, that I make my remarks. Before I get into that, I would like to make some general comments about Address in Reply speeches and, in particular, make some comments about the Address in Reply speech given by the member for Newland, the speaker preceding me.

One of my colleagues (who is not in the chamber at the moment) last week made some comment about the value of Address in Reply speeches, and indicated that we would better off if we did not use our time in this kind of debate, that we would be better off getting on with the business of the day. I have some sympathy with that because, I guess, a lot of the debate that occurs during the Address in Reply is not necessarily all that informed, it is not necessarily all that relevant, and it can be a bit waffly. However, I am of the view that members of the house, particularly in opposition and particularly on the back bench, should have opportunities to address issues which are of concern to them and to their constituents, and they do not have that many opportunities. They can move motions, and members do that, and they get opportunities in grievance, but they do not have many opportunities to speak at length on issues. I know that when I was in opposition I appreciated the opportunity to be able to speak for 30 minutes or so on issues that were relevant to either my shadow ministerial responsibilities or to my electorate. So, I would be very reluctant to get rid of those.

The other point is really a practical one. At the beginning of any session, the capacity to deal with matters for debate—government legislation—is a bit limited because the opposition likes to have at least a week or so to consider the bill. So, if we didn't have Address in Reply, I wonder what we would be debating for the first week or so while the opposition is being briefed and gets its position established in relation to the legislative program of the government.

The second point I wanted to raise was to respond, in part, to the arguments put by the member for Newland in her Address in Reply contribution. The member for Newland had two parts to speech. By far the biggest portion was the first part of the speech when she was talking about law and order, and the real theme of that speech is that there needed to be more money spent on policing in South Australia. That was her first point. The second part of her speech, which was the smaller portion, was really a lament on how taxes and charges

had gone up and that the government is taking too much out of the taxpayer. She then went on to talk about the need for more money to be spent in hospitals, and in education, and a range of government services. I put it to the member for Newland that there is an inherent contradiction in her speech. She cannot, on the one hand, be advocating for more expenditure by government, and on the other hand, be saying that government should take less taxation.

We have to get the balance right, and I believe this government has that balance right. We have a range of programs in place to address the priorities of the community, and we do not want to put undue pressure on it. I accept that there are concerns in the community at the moment, particularly about local council rates; that is really an issue for local council and, as I understand it, the council is going through the process of trying to address that. But, you cannot seriously come in here and say that we should spend more money on all of these things, and list them, and then say we should be collecting less tax.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Of course you can.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: The member for Newland says, 'Of course you can.' That is the great advantage of being in opposition: you can promote contradictory policy positions. It is probably the only advantage of being in opposition.

Having passed over the member for Newland's comments, I now want to talk a little about my own electorate and, in fact, to fulfil a promise I made to some of my constituents who have been involved in campaigning against the development in the Aldinga part of my electorate. Members may recall that, I think late last year, a parcel of land known as section 796 adjacent to the Aldinga Scrub was identified as a parcel of land which was in the process of receiving planning approval for development. This concerned many of my electors in that area, because that development parcel is close to the Aldinga Scrub. That is the largest remnant bit of native vegetation protected on the Adelaide Coast, and it is important, not only to the residents of Aldinga but also, I think, to everybody who has an interest in the environment in South Australia, particularly those involved in the parks movement and biodiversity protection.

The proposition to develop this piece of land caused a lot of grief in my electorate. There were protests and meetings, some of which I attended. I certainly went down and talked to the protesters on one occasion, and I also received a bundle of copies of petitions. Unfortunately, many of the petitions were not in a form which can be tabled in this chamber. I told my electors that I would make sure that the house was aware of their petitions and the number of people who signed them. It is a shame that we have this requirement that petitions have to be put in a particular form, but that is the truth of the matter, and there is nothing much that we can do about it. There were 300 or so signatures on petitions which were in the correct form, because after I visited the protesters at the site I told them that they needed to get the correct form. I provided one of their members with the correct form, and they have presented a petition to the Legislative Council.

The subject of that petition is as follows:

To the Honourable the President, and members of the Legislative Council.

In this present Parliament assembled—The humble Petition of the undersigned residents of South Australia. Respectfully sheweth:—that the proposed Aldinga Residential development at section 796, Aldinga Beach Road, Aldinga, South Australia, for the staged development of approximately 700 residential allotments by Canberra Investments Incorporated Limited is detrimental to the

ecosystem of the neighbouring Aldinga scrub and will disturb Aboriginal artefacts found on the site.

Your petitioners therefore pray that your Honourable House will impose a moratorium on this site to coincide with the 12 month moratoriums placed on the other local sites to enable thorough archaeological and environmental studies to be carried out before any developments are to proceed.

There were about 300 signatures or more. I understand my colleague, the Hon. Paul Holloway, has tabled that in the other house. In addition to that petition, which was on a proper form, there are also close to 900 signatures on a petition, which is in the following simple form:

The following people support the request for the state government of South Australia to impose a minimum 12 month moratorium on any start to Canberra Investment Corporation's proposed major housing development of Lot 796 Aldinga Beach.

Together, those two groups of signatures come to about 1 160, so there were 1 100 to 1 200 signatures provided, substantially saying the same thing. I want the house to be aware that a number of petitioners felt strongly about this issue. They are not all from my electorate, but many are and, of course, many are residents from other suburbs who use the Aldinga Shopping Centre; they come from Willunga and other places in the southern suburbs, as well as other places in the state. I congratulate those petitioners for getting together that series of petitions.

When I visited the protesters at the site, it was late one Friday afternoon and not many were there. I had an intriguing and interesting conversation, which has stayed in my memory since that occasion. The protesters had set up a tent and they had signs and the usual things that one would expect. On a Friday afternoon, there were about four or five of them to whom I spoke. I remember being struck by one young woman who had a child on her shoulders. I talked to her and she spoke to me about her concerns. I said, 'This land has been zoned in this particular way. It has been zoned "residential" for a long time. They have a right to develop it. All the planning processes have been gone through.'

I tried to explain, as best I could, the processes and the concessions we had been able to extract from the developer. She said, 'You are being quite reasonable. That is your job, but my job is to be unreasonable.' I thought she summed up very well the role of a protester and a constituent. She is quite correct in a way. The protesters see the issue and they are arguing what they believe and what they feel. They do not have to agree with the rules that were established by someone else at different times in the past. Of course, the government has to; those in public service have to, but they are able to say what they feel and what they believe. There are plenty of cases throughout history where individuals have stood up against rules and decisions which they believed were unjust. I acknowledge their absolute right to do that, provided they do not break any law. To my knowledge none of my constituents has broken any law.

What I want to say to those constituents is that through their protests and action they have actually achieved a great deal. They have not achieved the site's not being developed. I am absolutely clear about that, but they have achieved a great deal. Because of concerns expressed by constituents, the original housing application for 742 houses was reduced to 691 houses. The Onkaparinga council's development assessment panel approved the application subject to certain quite stringent conditions, including mandatory installation of rainwater tanks plumbed for household use—and I think that is probably a first in the state; the mandatory installation of a solar hot water service for every house on the site—and

I am not sure whether that is a first but certainly it is one of the first sites where that has occurred; development of an approved landscape plan with indigenous plantings for open space areas; and restricting the type of plantings that occur in the gardens of houses closest to the Aldinga Scrub. The developers have put out a schedule of plants which are appropriate. There was some debate about whether they are appropriate, and I understand they have taken some of the inappropriate plants off that list. The conditions also include the development of a water management plan for the treatment of stormwater to ensure that it does not adversely affect the Aldinga Scrub; a vermin-proof fence between the north perimeter of the scrub and the land division; wetlands for stormwater management; and measures to reduce the impact on the surroundings during construction.

In addition to that, after council made those conditions, they were also able to extract from the developers a wider buffer between the future housing and the scrub, and single storey development around the knoll area to protect views of the Willunga Hills (a knoll is a slight rise). In relation to that particular issue, I have had over 100 notes or copies of notes sent to me from other people in the area who have said to me that nearly all the local residents would prefer no development on this land; 'Surely, it is not too much to ask that at least some of the outstanding views south from Aldinga Beach Road across the knoll reserve be preserved, as the drawing indicates.' I am pleased to say that government and council have been able to work it out so that that can occur. That was as a result of concessions from the developer, as well.

So, we have kept the knoll. We have also been able to get \$200 000 from the developer for protective measures for the scrub. My department has set up a working group with the Friends of the Aldinga Scrub and other residents in that location to look at how we can spend this \$200 000 to best look after the scrub, and we have also received \$275 000 from the developer for local health services. So, a lot of things have been achieved. They are not everything that my constituents want—I acknowledge that. All I can say is that, as their local member, I have tried to do the best I can to mitigate against detriment to the scrub, because it is important to me as the environment minister and also as the local member. We will continue working with the community, the department, the developers and the council to try to get the best outcome. I will now leave that particular issue.

I also want to talk about some other matters in my area. I was fascinated by the member for Mawson's comments during his Address in Reply. He said:

As the local member I am very concerned about the Aldinga area, because it has an impact on my own electorate.

The member for Mawson is not the local member for Aldinga; I am. I am fascinated to know what impact this area has on his electorate. He went on to say:

I am also concerned as the shadow minister for the southern suburbs that the government has allowed so much development to go on there without actually getting in early and planning for infrastructure, particularly in the way of health services, community services, and road and sewerage infrastructure.

This is just cant. The member for Mawson has decided to take a close interest in my electorate. Well, I say to the member for Mawson that I have now decided to take a close interest in his electorate. I assure him that I will be making close—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I thank my colleague the member for West Torrens and others for their offers to help, but I will be taking a particularly close interest in the member for Mawson's electorate. We had a peaceful coexistence arrangement in the past—

Mr Koutsantonis: A non-aggression pact.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: —a non-aggression pact—but, given his interference in my electorate with what he has said in this house, I will now take a particular interest in his electorate because no doubt it has an impact on my constituents also. The point that the honourable member makes about lack of infrastructure planning and development is amazing. His government was in power for eight years, and anybody would have been aware of these issues, but they did absolutely nothing.

I will go through those matters. In relation to health services, the southern suburbs are suffering, not just my electorate but all of the sudden suburbs, through a lack of doctors. One statistic that I saw indicated that there is a shortage of 40 doctors in the southern suburbs. We have difficulty attracting doctors to the southern suburbs; they prefer to stay close to the city where they live and to travel less distance, I guess. Part of the problem has been the federal government's reluctance to expand the number of provider numbers so that new doctors can train and other doctors with the subsidy or concession schemes can be attracted to the south. They have loosened that up a little over recent months, so I do not want to be overly critical, but we do need more doctors. This is a federal issue. Through the arrangements we put in place with the developers, we now have a sum of money to spend on some health infrastructure in that area, and we will do that.

In relation to schools, much has been made of the development pressures that were placed on the education department involving schools in the area. There are two schools on one campus: Aldinga Primary and Aldinga Junior Primary. These are very fine schools. I visited them as recently as last Friday to have a talk with one of the principals about the pressures.

Ms Chapman: Overcrowding.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The member for Bragg says, 'Overcrowding'. Strangely enough, that is not what the principal said. In fact, the principal said that there is plenty of capacity to put a further 200 or so children in the school. The school has had up to 750 or 800 students in the past and at the moment it has about 550, so there is plenty of capacity on that site. The principals are keen to work with the education department and use their facilities for any expanded development in that part of the southern suburbs. In addition, of course, the Catholic Church is undertaking a feasibility study on building a school in the area.

Schooling is actually being addressed in a reasonable way. Of course, we also have issues to do with public transport. One of the things that I am pleased about is that, early on in our term, the government provided integrated ticketing for the buses that served the Aldinga community so that constituents there now only have to pay one price when they want to catch a bus from Aldinga to the city. Previously they had to go through a dual system. There is a bus system; it could be better but, as the population grows, there will be capacity to provide additional services. That is something that I am looking forward to. As the Minister for the Southern Suburbs, over the last couple of years I have been working assiduously and quietly, without making too much political fuss, with the local councils and the Office of the Southern Suburbs to

address a number of issues. I will go through some of those issues. We have a graffiti program, which we have been working on; we are about to make some announcements in relation to that. We have a Clever Communities program, and we are about to make some announcements in relation to that. We are working on infrastructure planning in the Aldinga, Lonsdale and Seaford Rise areas. We are doing a whole range of things to try to address some of those infrastructure issues.

The southern suburbs have had some pressure placed upon them in terms of economic activity. Mobil has closed, as we all know; Mitsubishi is going to downsize and, in particular, the Lonsdale site will be closed. There have been processes to attract more industry to the area, and I am pleased that the commonwealth and state governments have been able to work cooperatively. I was a bit surprised to see the federal minister pre-empt the decision-making process during the heat of the election campaign to announce that one company, Fibre Logic, will be given financial support to establish itself. I have met the proprietor of that company who is a young man who has built up a company which was in receivership into a thriving organisation which now needs to expand. I think it is absolutely fantastic that this joint fund proposed by the state and federal governments will support his business. He is exactly the sort of entrepreneur that we need in the southern suburbs: young, dynamic, with good vision, good working relationships with other industries in the area, and a very progressive approach to his work force. I congratulate him, and I look forward to seeing his company develop.

Another economic activity in that area at the moment is the proposal by Centro, the owners of the Colonnades shopping centre, to substantially increase investment on that site. I understand that they are looking at some \$80 million to invest and substantially increase the size of the shopping centre. It will really compete with the Marion Shopping Centre, and that is very good for the outer southern suburbs. It is also an indication of the belief that Centro has in the future of the southern suburbs, and it is a very bright future. We have had some minor glitches in terms of Mobil and Mitsubishi—perhaps I should not say they are minor; they had substantial impact on some businesses and those individuals who work there. However, I think that there is confidence in the community in terms of the future. I think that those examples that I have given indicate that.

I conclude by saying how much I appreciate the support that I get from my constituents. I do not spend as much time in my electorate now that I am a minister. I think that they accept and understand that, and I hope that they believe they are getting a good deal out of it because, as a minister, I obviously have more bargaining chips that I can use to support my electorate. I have an excellent and wonderful electorate; I enjoy representing it. It is a beautiful part of the state; it has 30 kilometres of beaches. I think it is a place where everybody enjoys living. They are not conscripted to go there: they really like living in that area. In passing, I pay tribute to my electorate office staff who do a wonderful job supporting my constituents when I am not available to help them.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: That is right. I also thank the volunteers who support me and also the volunteers who support all the organisations in the community. There is a very strong sense of voluntarism in the southern suburbs, and I think that is one of the strengths. I commend the Address in Reply, and once again thank the Lieutenant-Governor for making the speech on behalf of the Governor.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): On this occasion may I first acknowledge the continued excellent contribution of Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson in her service to South Australia, which she continues to undertake with diligence and felicity, coupled with the contribution from the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr Bruno Kruminis, who, on this occasion, delivered the Executive Address to the parliament, and the outstanding contribution by the staff at Government House in their continued service.

As at 12.18 p.m. today, the Australian residential population was 20 179 067 persons. There is one birth every two minutes and five seconds. There is one death every three minutes and 55 seconds. There is a net international migration input to Australia of one every four minutes and six seconds and, overall, an extra person in this country, other than tourists, every two minutes and eight seconds. Population is a very important area of national and state public policy in which a considerable amount of work needs to be done, and I suggest that there is a clear case for action in our state.

Two closely connected national trends to the population were highlighted at the National Population Summit last year. First, we are expected to fall below zero growth by about 2063; and, secondly, we have an ageing population whose median age is predicted to increase to 45 years by 2041. As should be well recognised, this imbalance is occurring much faster in regional areas and is more pronounced in South Australia than any other mainland state. Therefore, it is a critically important policy area for South Australia, which faces an ageing and declining population and consequential labour shortages. Our state's economic and social future and national standing are at stake if these demographic challenges are not comprehensively met, and I am disappointed to note that there is no mention whatsoever of what the government is doing or will do in population policy in the Deputy Governor's address at the opening of this Fourth Session of the Fiftieth Parliament.

Clearly, long-term decision making to prepare for the future and grow a sustainable population will need to take into account regional development, infrastructure, immigration and fertility rates. If not, our shrinking taxpayer base will struggle to support our ageing population. The two factors which have the greatest impact on population growth are fertility and overseas migration. Without urgent targeted policy intervention, South Australia's population is at risk of stagnating. Population growth will underpin a stronger economy that focuses on backing small business and creating more jobs. I acknowledge the work of agencies such as the Australian Population Institute SA (known as APop), which convened the National Population Summit 2003 at Parliament House last year and which made a valuable contribution to the public debate.

It is important to note the key points made at the summit by APop, which were: first, the population growth will be below zero from about 2063; secondly, the median age will rise to 45 years by 2041; thirdly, regional areas will feel the effects before metropolitan areas; fourthly, problems in regional areas have mirror image impacts in some urban areas to which population is flowing such as costs for new infrastructure, air and water pollution and waste management problems; and, fifthly, more than 40 per cent of migrants still settle in the Sydney basin. Alarming, it also says:

Against this backdrop, South Australia is the canary in the coalmine—its population will age more quickly and experience the onset of decline sooner. This is driven partly by migration patterns,

with South Australia receiving a low share of the national migration intake and experiencing a net outflow of interstate migrants.

What will happen if we simply do nothing in South Australia? The ageing and declining population growth has several direct and adverse impacts which were set out at that convention.

They are: changes in the size and composition of domestic markets resulting in fewer viable businesses and fewer employment opportunities; depreciating business and residential assets and the decay of public infrastructure; possible cuts to service levels as per capita demand for service delivery increases and the tax base erodes; service cuts and fewer economic opportunities resulting in further out-migration from the fastest-ageing regions, especially by younger, more economically active people; a declining supply of skilled labour due to lower participation rates amongst mature age people and continued out-migration; lower investment returns expected in faster ageing and slower growing regions impacting on investment levels and job creation; increased fiscal pressure on governments; and population factors hampering GDP growth over the next 40 years with both GDP and GDP per capita likely to grow more slowly than in the past 40 years.

Despite the advice of the urgency for measures to meet the challenge, we see that the real initiatives—and only significant initiatives—for public policy in relation to population sit with the federal government. Premier Rann's contribution has represented tokenism. So, what has the federal government then done? I note that the initiatives of the federal immigration minister (Senator Amanda Vanstone) have made some changes to commonwealth policies, and it is expected that these will have a significant impact on population and work force trends. Well, thank goodness for her because, obviously, nothing else is happening.

Those initiatives are, first, that Adelaide, along with Hobart, is being made a regional area for point purposes, making it much easier for aspiring migrants to qualify to live here compared with other Australian cities. Secondly, the minister announced last year the provision of onshore visa options to overseas students, thereby removing the requirement that they return to their country of origin to make their application. Thirdly, effective July this year, providing a new skilled independent regional visa for qualified persons who want to come to Australia as skilled migrants where they can obtain a three year temporary resident's visa if they commit to living and working in regional Australia. After two years they will be able to apply for permanent residency.

Also, in July this year there will be a new visa to encourage self-funded independent retirees to settle in regional areas. This is a temporary four-year visa, easily rolled over for ongoing four-year periods and where qualification is based on factors such as investment in state bonds or projects, maintenance of health insurance and financial independence. The most recent announcement was for the holding of temporary protection visa and temporary humanitarian visa persons who are now eligible to apply for mainstream migration visas once they have been employed in a regional area for 12 months.

In stark contrast to these initiatives, the state government has, first, appointed a population minister. Just in case members have forgotten who it is, it is the Hon. Kevin Foley—the absent minister for population, I call him, who was not even present at the estimates hearings in June this year to answer questions on population. Secondly, the state

government supported, at least, the Population Summit by making this chamber available in 2003. It was convened by others. Thirdly, it has published a Population Strategy in 2004, but there has been no real action. We are left with all words and no action.

The Premier has failed to act on the key recommendation of the Economic Development Board that the government consolidate the population-related functions of the departments of premier and cabinet and business, manufacturing and trade into a Population Unit reporting to the Minister for Federal/State Relations. The Premier has announced that the Treasurer (Hon. Mr Foley) had been given the job of developing population policy as part of his role as Minister for Federal/State Relations, but at estimates he said that the unit had been retained in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

To date, the only statements from this government have been, first, to appoint what it called a migration specialist. This is an extra employee in the Agent-General's office in London to be paid \$65 000 a year to promote South Australia to potential migrants, notwithstanding that this is already within the ambit and terms of reference of that office. Secondly, it was to announce expenditure on migration initiatives over the next four years. We have heard about the money, namely, \$6 million on what the government calls 'migration initiatives', but we have no detail, no action and no outcomes. We have \$3.84 million for return to work credits to which I will refer shortly, and \$.04 million for other workplace initiatives. However, we have no detail.

The third thing it did was announce that it would join up with someone else's program—namely, the Australian Institute of Commercialisation—to connect highly skilled expatriates with local businesses and research institutes. Of considerable concern is that, despite its importance to this state, the South Australian government has not commissioned or undertaken any research into the matter. This is despite this recommendation from the National Population Summit:

... urgent research be commissioned to establish an optimum population target and corresponding annual quotas for immigration, taking account of the natural population, environmental sustainability, infrastructure requirements, skills and labour market issues, immigration categories and regional distribution.

At estimates, I questioned the Premier on this issue in the light of his announcement in March that a population target for South Australia of 2 million by 2050 was contained in the State Strategic Plan. When asked what research the South Australian government had actually undertaken to establish that population target, and the corresponding annual quotas, the Premier admitted that the target had been set by him. In fact, he said, 'The target of 2 million by 2050 was set by me.' There has been no research into where this population might reside, which is necessary, in the Premier's words in his budget, to ensure 'long-term sustainability of the economy and the community'.

Instead of determining what is economically and environmentally sustainable for South Australia, at a time when water and energy resources are critical issues facing the state, the Premier has made a stab in the dark. This is an astonishing admission which exposes how superficial the Premier is when making plans for the state's future. The concept of stating an optimum population policy for Australia is not one universally endorsed. However, I support and accept that a realistic target population (but, unlike Labor's target, based on sound research) is actually necessary in order to plan for the future infrastructure needs of the state.

In estimates, I asked the Premier to identify which research he had relied on for his stab in the dark and what supported the sustainability. He stated:

I can reveal today—major announcement—that the group chaired by Dr Adam Graycar is looking into these matters.

Three months later, what has happened? Nothing. There has been no research, and not one document has been produced by this group chaired by the chief of staff to the Premier. We still do not know whether the group exists, who its members are (if it has met at all) and what its terms of reference are. Clearly, we need to know where this extra half a million people projected by the government, or, in particular, the Premier, will live, what jobs they will have, what schools and hospitals will be provided for them and, of course, what financial support will be given, and where they will live in South Australia, given that, at the same time, we are talking about saving the River Murray and that energy issues are also clearly critical for the future of this state. However, the Premier has revealed that he has plucked this figure out of the air by failing to rely on research to support the sustainability of this target.

So, what is this government providing for—at least for its own initiatives—in relation to this projected extra 500 000 people in this state by 2020? Here is the current picture. It certainly is not providing new public schools—in fact, it has closed three. There are no new public hospitals, and we still have the longest surgical waiting list in South Australia's history. There is no new water—in fact, we are still struggling to save the River Murray. There are no new police—in fact, at this stage we have 40 fewer than the base establishment level. There is no new power—in fact, many families are now paying an extra 43 per cent for that service. There are certainly no new jobs: full-time employment is down, and there are 7 600 fewer full-time jobs than a year ago, which is totally against the national trend. Finally, there is no extra net public housing. It is all very well to invite people here to experience South Australia's sunshine and fresh air, but they cannot live on that. They need water, power, a home, a school, a hospital and a job.

University of Adelaide Professor of Geography and Director of Social Application for GIS, Professor Graeme Hugo, in his 2003 population report, said that we need to research in South Australia as a matter of urgency the following: tracing the effects of ageing on state revenues and expenditure—good luck; investigating the implications for the government and the economy of the retirement of the baby boomers—a major challenge; documenting who is moving to South Australia, and why, and where ex-South Australians are living overseas, and how they can be attracted home; investigating the constraints on women in South Australia to having more than 1.7 children on average; and conducting an analysis of the population movement into, out of and within South Australia between 1996 and 2001 to establish the redistribution of population occurring between Adelaide and non-metropolitan South Australia.

A regional population policy will need to be addressed if we are to provide an antidote to Labor's influence in country areas, with initiatives such as education, scholarships and unskilled migration. We need to develop our regional areas economically and socially, particularly if we are to ease the pressure on major urban centres. Professor Hugo pointed out:

The state needs to increase its work in the area of regional development. Sustainable increases in economic output in several non-metropolitan parts of the state have not been translated into regional population growth. This is partly due to entrenched

philosophies of increasing centralisation of services. There is a need to focus on the economic growth occurring in these areas and how they can be levered to assist development of sustainable regional communities.

It is time the Premier listened; that is clearly what the experts are telling us. In essence, there are three ways to combat state population decline: you have to increase the birth rate, you have to increase the migration to South Australia and you have to decrease the migration out of South Australia. It is that simple.

I will leave fertility for another day: it is another subject. It is the last strategy that I will now address. The loss of South Australians to other states or countries is critical to an environment of low birth and death rates, and it is alarming in an environment of the looming work shortage crisis for South Australia. Already we have evidence of shortages in a range of industries, and these include engineering, electronics, information technology, nursing, medical, child care and even hairdressing. We have heard the mantra from the government, but just two minutes was allocated for employment, training and further education at the opening of this session of parliament. The following is what was said:

My government is committed to achieving sustained economic growth—with all South Australians sharing in the benefits through more and better job opportunities and accessible, high quality services. To this end, it will develop and implement a Statewide Workforce Development Strategy designed to bring about a more skilled workforce and efficient labour market. The Strategy—along with a review of the traineeship and apprenticeship system—will seek to ensure South Australia's training system can provide for future skill needs.

We are in the third year of this government, and what do we have? Another committee to develop a strategy and another review. That is the mantra. So, what is the reality? Federally, at least, by combining on and off the job training, the Howard government's new apprenticeships program has proven to be an outstanding success, with more than 416 000 new apprentices currently in training. Interestingly, and I think importantly, some 15 000 of those are people over the age of 45 years. I also note that there has been a 20 per cent increase in the number of commencements in traditional trades such as electrical, plumbing and automotive—and that is particularly important when I refer to what is happening here under the South Australian government.

Under the federal Labor position, youth unemployment soared 25.5 per cent in 1992; only 141 000 were in apprenticeships in 1995; unmet demand for TAFE places reached 60 700; and workers were unable to find jobs. That was the dire picture under the previous federal Labor government. Today, as a result of the coalition's economic record, this situation has been reversed. The greatest challenge for business today is finding people to take up the skilled jobs.

The federal government has announced an extra \$5 million over the next three years to assist people undertaking a new apprenticeship away from home, that is, to expand the residential support for those who move away from their family home to take up or remain in a new apprenticeship by providing a payment for the third year of their new apprenticeship on top of the payments for the first and second years, which are currently paid. This initiative will at least assist more than 2 900 new apprentices each year across Australia, predominantly from rural and regional areas.

Let us consider what is happening at the state level and the picture is far different. In 2002 Premier Rann's election promise was to drop TAFE fees by 10 per cent. What happened? In the 2003 budget we found that the TAFE fees

had increased by 50 per cent, so new apprentices had to pay \$1.50 an hour for tuition, up from \$1 per hour—broken promise! In 2004, we discover marked cutbacks in the training places in areas experiencing severe skill shortages. Incredibly, the automotive industry has seen a cut by this government of 140 places from 3 440 to 3 300; a cut in building and construction training places of 180 from 3 580 to 3 400; engineering and mining—amazingly, given the Premier's announcement this week on his commitment to mining in this state—has had a cut in training places of 300 from 6 200 to 5 900; and, when it comes to training places in gas and water utilities, you guessed it, another cut of 180 this year from 2 880 to 2 700.

To take such steps when the state is faced with a looming shortage of skilled and semi-skilled workers in many industries is extraordinary and, quite frankly, inexplicable. One of the best ways to tackle the looming skill shortage and our population decline is to ensure that we retain at least the young people we have. But, instead of providing more training places this year, the Rann Labor government has cut the traditional trade places and has thereby reduced the opportunity for young people to realistically be involved in the workplace. At a time when the competition for skilled, experienced and able employees is heightened in every western country in the world, our state government is making it harder for younger people to be skilled, with fee increases and apprenticeship places cut. It simply does not make sense.

TAFE is the public sector training ground and, if the government were really serious about encouraging opportunities for the 70 per cent of our young people who do not go to university, it would ensure that these courses are affordable. It is absolutely incredible. It is a case of bad policy and bad timing when South Australia's skilled workers are being stolen and sucked across the border with enticing offers by another state. In this context the unskilled can expect to be left on the scrap heap.

Then, of course, there is the Rann government return to work initiative. Let me tell members about that. It offers \$1 200 to an unskilled, unemployed person with a child or children to assist in the costs of undertaking approved courses or to contribute to the first year HECS or child-care costs. Sounds good, but why on earth is the state government talking about restructuring and then insisting that the person who wants to retrain has to wait two years child caring before they are even qualify? Such policies mean that the state government cannot expect us to believe that it is serious about assisting re-entry into the workplace.

To deal with the shortage in the short to medium term, it makes sense to retain older people and to introduce initiatives such as the tax incentives for them to remain in the work force. It is this group, mature workers, who I consider will save South Australia from economic disaster resulting from the population decline. Let us consider again what the federal government action is. It says, 'Let's have a mature aged worker tax offset which will provide an extra incentive for people to stay in work beyond the age of 55 years.' Hooray! At least somebody is doing something. It acknowledges that mature aged Australians do make a significant contribution to business and to be productive in the workplace. They are, for example, less likely to be absent from work and act as a good and steady influence on younger employees.

There is, however, a strong trend for skilled workers, especially males (I am not sure why, but that is what the statistics tell us) to retire early—often well before pension

age. Once retired the likelihood of them returning to work declines significantly and, as a result, the Australian work force participation rates fall sharply amongst those in the 55 to 65 age cohort. So far the Rann government has offered nothing, and I call on the state government to urgently adopt a state policy directed towards, first, keeping mature workers in employment and, secondly, getting them back to work. I am sure that there other good ideas that can come from others here in this parliament, but may I suggest the first few?

1. Discourage early retirement, particularly as in this state we have the highest early retirement rate in the country.

2. Remove the retirement age. Historically, the retirement age of 60 to 65 was set in the early part of last century at a time when most people were actually dead by 58. Now, of course, we know that people live up to 20 years longer. I would never suggest that we cancel retirement—that would be seen as somewhat draconian—but clearly we must be realistic and recognise that mature workers represent the only remaining segment of the work force in which participation rates can be increased.

3. Meaningful jobs must be offered to mature employees (and I hope that this will be helpful in this debate), where they are encouraged to make a planned transition from full time work to part time retirement and work, and in the meantime play a valuable supervisory and mentoring role to other workers.

4. I believe it is important to give real incentives to mature workers to seek training to upskill, particularly in areas of high need. In the area of nursing, for example, which we know is an area of critical need in this state and in fact in most Western countries in the world, we could surely provide incentives to assist with the subsidy of child care for people re-entering this industry. We could surely expand on the on-the-job training to give real experience. Of course, this requires sheer guts from this government to renegotiate this issue with the unions and stop playing around with what is a very important service that people here in South Australia need.

Perhaps another area is that we could recognise experience in child and family care as part of the retraining qualifications, particularly of those who provide care to the aged and disabled. In schools we have for some years now recognised volunteer work as part of the SACE qualification, and surely it is time that we took up the initiative to recognise this and allow it to apply to adults.

South Australia is our home. It is a state that has faced adversity before and we will face it again. But it is before us now. I have hesitated, but I do consider that in this area it is grossly neglectful of any government—but especially this one—to sit on its hands, claim to be understanding and concerned, issue some statements and then do nothing to actually act on a most critical issue. I expect better from this government. I expect to have this properly addressed not only in the next year's budget, but I also look forward with interest to hearing the next opening address to the next session of the parliament; I expect this government should deliver. I support the motion.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8.56 p.m. the house adjourned until Wednesday 22 September at 2 p.m.

