

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday 30 May 2005

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

### MEMBERS, SERVICE

**The SPEAKER:** The chair would like to acknowledge the record of the member for Stuart (Hon. Graham Gunn), with 35 years continuous service in the parliament. I understand that the member for Stuart is now the longest-serving member of any parliament in the Commonwealth of Australia.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**The SPEAKER:** Unfortunately, I do not have the power to declare a half holiday; otherwise, I would do so!

Also, I convey the best wishes of this house to the Hon. Terry Roberts, who has undergone surgery. He is facing somewhat of a challenge, and we wish him all the best and a speedy recovery.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

### ANIMALS, CRUELTY

A petition signed by 979 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to increase the penalties for cruelty to animals including jail terms and detention centres for under age offenders, was presented by the Hon. D.C. Brown.

Petition received.

### MARINE PROTECTION AREAS

A petition signed by 393 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to withdraw proposed marine protected areas from the Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island and consult with fishing, tourism and boating groups before introducing new proposals, was presented by the Hon. D.C. Brown.

Petition received.

### DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

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

Leave granted.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I will provide copies. The photostat machine upstairs, I am told, has jammed. We will provide copies for the leader shortly.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** What do you call it—a photocopier. Thank you.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The house will come to order.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** It is not true that we reduced funding to the parliament so that we can no longer afford functioning photocopiers.

The annual funding of the office of the DPP has increased from \$6.039 million in the last Liberal budget to \$11.45 million in the budget that I handed down last Thursday. I am advised that the spending increase in the office of the DPP represents one of the largest funding increases in real terms of any government agency in this state since the government came to office in 2002 (that is, a 44 per

cent increase). I am advised that that translates into an increase in staff from 67 in 2001-02 to 103 by the end of this coming financial year. Given the very large increase in this budget, I was astonished to see the DPP hold a media conference on the day before the budget was released last week on what appeared to be the pretext—

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** After your attacks on the Auditor-General—of lobbying for extra funds for his office. And this from a person who had only a few weeks before told the Press Club lunch the following in relation to comments from politicians:

Why is the media the first port of call? If your intention is to really find an answer, why not pick up the telephone to the DPP or the Attorney-General.

I would be surprised if Mr Pallaras QC did not understand that, less than 24 hours before the budget is released, it has already been finalised and printed ready for distribution. There could be no other interpretation, therefore, than to believe—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** That's a typo—the photostat machine! No other word is meant to be there, I am sure. I believe Mr Pallaras was not making a genuine budget bid, but rather was playing politics in the media by picking a fight with the government. Indeed, his media statements were provocative, to say the least.

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** This follows a series of criticisms of politicians, including the Premier, over his public statements following the McGee case and the Premier's decision to appoint a royal commission over aspects of the case. Mr Pallaras is no stranger to the use of the media to advocate his point of view. It is important to note that, as Treasurer (and, Mr Speaker, it is important to hear this), I have not received any direct representations for additional funding to cover cost pressures, as alluded to by the DPP in his press conference, throughout the entire budget process as opposed to new initiatives in the state budget, most of which were funded.

In the absence of a specific request, the Premier and I made a decision late in the budget process to provide additional funding for the DPP over and above what had already been approved.

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** He knew. On Wednesday afternoon, after Mr Pallaras's provocative and political press conference, I took up the invitation he issued at the Press Club lunch and picked up the phone and rang him direct rather than respond to him through the media. The following day, Mr Pallaras claimed to the Attorney-General that my phone call to him was intimidating and an attempt to interfere with his independence.

**The Hon. M.J. Atkinson:** Stop intimidating Elliot Ness.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Stop intimidating Elliot Ness? Yes, I don't think! Furthermore, the DPP claimed that the tenor of the call was a clear warning that, if the DPP was to persist, his office would be in jeopardy of having its funds reduced. This is very concerning to me.

**Ms Chapman:** Did he threaten you with a separation of powers?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Separation of powers? Give us a break. It is very concerning to me. That was not—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The house is becoming disorderly.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** It is very concerning to me. That was not the intent, and it is wrong to represent it that way. I can accept that it was a misunderstanding. In my phone call to Mr Pallaras, I pointed out that the suggestion in his press release and subsequent press conference that increases to his budget should be commensurate with increases to the police was just silly. I told him that the DPP's budget had been increased by 44 per cent in real terms over the past four budgets, whereas the police budget had been increased by about 13 per cent in real terms.

I made the point to Mr Pallaras that, if he were to engage in a public debate over funding, his calls for commensurate funding represented a call for a reduction in his budget. That was the silliness in his argument. In effect, I told Mr Pallaras that he could not be seriously suggesting that he wanted an increase commensurate with the police because that would involve handing back money. Considered fairly in the context that that remark was made, it cannot be seriously suggested that I threatened a funding cut to the DPP.

**The Hon. I.F. Evans:** Let's hear from the DPP on that.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I am sure you will. I told Mr Pallaras—

**An honourable member:** No problem hearing from him.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Yes; I'm sure he'll be into the media very quickly. I told Mr Pallaras that he had better pick another argument because I was more than confident about our record on resourcing the Office of the DPP. I made it clear to him that I was happy to deal with the matter in parliament. At the time I spoke to Mr Pallaras I was quite prepared, as I am now, to defend in parliament this government's record on funding for the Office of the DPP. I said that I was concerned that Mr Pallaras, as an independent statutory officer—

*Mrs Redmond interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I said I was concerned that Mr Pallaras, as an independent statutory officer, had chosen to make public his criticism of the budget outcome for his office and that I considered he was entering into a political stoush that was highly inappropriate and totally avoidable. In my opinion, Mr Pallaras's posturing over resources was unbecoming of a statutory office holder. If he interpreted my call as a rebuke, then so be it. In fact, at one stage I told Mr Pallaras that I was unconcerned if he chose to speak out publicly on law and order issues, but that he should speak to me if he has any concerns about budget matters. At no point did he express any concern to me that our discussion impinged upon his independence. Mr Pallaras did not attempt to terminate the conversation—

*Mr Brokenshire interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Mawson is off to a bad start.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Thank you, sir. I will repeat that. At no point did he express any concern to me that our discussion impinged upon his independence. Mr Pallaras did not attempt to terminate the conversation nor to change the subject of the matters under discussion. To the contrary, Mr Pallaras engaged in a vigorous and forthright discussion. At the conclusion of our conversation we both agreed that in future we should talk about his budget and avoid playing

'political volleyball' in the media. No doubt I made my points to him emphatically. He was equally emphatic in his response. After all, as any holder of public office would know and understand, those who enter into a political debate should be aware of the adversarial nature of it. In other words, if you dish out criticism you have to be prepared to take it as well.

In conclusion, I completely reject his late complaint that I said anything to Mr Pallaras that could be fairly or properly characterised as an attempt to interfere with his independence. Mr Pallaras may also be assured that, as always, additional funding for the Office of the DPP will be considered on its merits and subject to the capacity of the state's finances and having regard to the overall priorities of the state—a process that every statutory office holder, every senior public servant and every department must always follow. Mr Pallaras is not a special case for government funding. Having said that, I now look forward to seeing Mr Pallaras putting his considerable debating skills to good use in a court of law. In summary, Mr Pallaras can't have it both ways.

*Members interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** He can't attack us through the media, and then invite us to pick up the phone and talk to him directly, but then whinge about it when we take up his clear invitation. The truth is that he does not seem to like public or private criticism but he does not mind dishing it out. I did not talk to him about any legal case. He would have had a right to complain about that. Instead, I talked as Treasurer about the budget. That is my job. But he still complains. You cannot complain about not having the budget increase of your dreams when you do not even write to the Treasurer a letter spelling out what you want. The Premier looks forward to visiting the DPP's office tomorrow.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The house will come to order before I call the Attorney.

*The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:*

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

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order or they will experience some law and order in here. Does the member for Unley have a point of order?

**Mr BRINDAL:** I do, sir. Under standing order 107 the minister is given considerable scope in making statements to the house, but we have just witnessed a diatribe of his personal opinion, and I wonder if that transgresses the rules of that standing order.

**The SPEAKER:** It was not a personal statement per se. As I understood it, it was meant to be a ministerial statement.

*The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Bright will be warned in a moment.

#### PARLIAMENT, SESQUICENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

**The SPEAKER:** In 2006-07 it will be the celebration of the sesquicentenary of this parliament, and I invite members who have ideas and thoughts about how we could and should celebrate that to give those suggestions to the Clerk or me.

## STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

**The SPEAKER:** The Standing Orders Committee will be meeting this week, and any member who wishes to contribute to that by way of suggestion is welcome to do so by contacting a member of the committee, the Clerk or me.

### CHILD ABUSE

**The Hon. I.P. LEWIS (Hammond):** I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

**The SPEAKER:** Leave is granted. It must be a personal explanation.

**The Hon. I.P. LEWIS:** The article attributed to Greg Kelton in Saturday's *Advertiser* quotes the Minister for Police and the Deputy Premier as having said:

Each of those [quite serious and outrageous allegations] have been thoroughly investigated. . . All were found to be totally baseless, without merit and false. . . For Peter Lewis to have raised these allegations—

(and I am quoting the Deputy Premier as attributed in *The Advertiser*):

. . . and suggest it is a serving MP behind it is outrageous.

Mr Speaker, the police have never said that about my remarks; Commissioner Mullighan has never said that about my remarks; I have never made such allegations. It is true that I have said that I want the statistical correlation between the two common elements of the events to be investigated—

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** I rise on a point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Deputy Premier has a point of order.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY:** Sir, I assume that the matters being canvassed by the member for Hammond may well be the matters that are subject to current deliberations by the police and the DPP in relation to aspects following the police report.

**The SPEAKER:** I am not aware that this specific matter is before the court, but I gather that the member for Hammond may have concluded his personal explanation. Is that correct?

**The Hon. I.P. LEWIS:** I have finished, thank you.

## QUESTION TIME

### DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Does the government have confidence in Steve Pallaras as DPP?

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

### MINDA INCORPORATED

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** My question is to the Minister for Families and Communities. What is the state government doing to help Minda with its plans to move 105 people from that institution into supported accommodation places in the community?

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities):** I thank the honourable member for her question. Minda is an organisation that occupies a fond place in the hearts of many South Australians, so it is with great pleasure that we are able to indicate that we can support Minda in providing services and support for a number of its residents on the Minda campus through a program called

Project 105, which will assist 105 people to move into supported accommodation in the community. It will be assisted by one-off funding of \$15 million from the state government.

The program comprises three parts: first, \$3.9 million for capital works; secondly, funding for the purchase of 14 group homes for Minda, which will each accommodate five residents; and, thirdly, money to buy 48 commonwealth aged care licences so that Minda can appropriately care for its clients who are ageing. Once the purchase of aged care licences is complete, funds will be released to enable 48 additional supported accommodated places to be provided by this one organisation alone.

Last Friday, I had the great pleasure of taking the Deputy Premier to Minda so that he could see for himself the wonderful work the organisation does for not only people with intellectual disability but also, importantly, for their families and carers. Minda's Chief Executive, Phil Martin, described the extra money as a terrific start, and he was optimistic that this contribution would assist his organisation in its important task of moving people into the community, where we know they do so much better. We are also providing Orana with \$1.4 million for building costs and furnishings so that it can redevelop its hostel at Clarence Gardens into four separate houses for 20 people in total. There is a lot of catching up to be done in the disability services area. We know that, after 8½ years of neglect in this area by the previous government—

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker, namely, debate.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. The minister is now getting into debate.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:** I return to my point relating to Minda. It is an essential part of the service delivery network for disability services in this state. We were very pleased to make to this organisation a contribution that will take a massive chunk out of the supported accommodation waiting list, which I know is a top priority for a number of people in the community.

### DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** Will the Attorney-General confirm that, in bilateral discussions on the budget for the DPP's office, all submissions are made by the Attorney-General and not by the DPP directly? Today, in his ministerial statement, the Treasurer said, 'You cannot complain about not having the budget increase of your dreams when you don't even write to the Treasurer a letter spelling out what you want.' Under the budget process, it is the responsibility of the Attorney-General to make a submission for extra funding for the DPP's office.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** The Leader of the Opposition is quite right in thinking that it is the Attorney-General who makes the budget bids.

### SCHOOLS, REGIONAL TRANSPORT

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. How is the state government improving transportation to and from school for students in country areas?

**The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services):** I thank the member for Giles for her question, which is opportune, as we are about to

announce an investment in school buses for regional and rural South Australia. As the parliament knows, over the last few months we have invested an extra \$25 million in our School Pride strategy, a scheme that allows us to invest money in the overdue upgrade and maintenance of buildings, paint and signage, which is part of our AAA dividend that we can spend on our schools because of the fine fiscal management of the economy by the Treasurer.

The state government understands that schools in country areas continually require additional and upgraded school buses to ensure that students are transported comfortably to school. Now, as part of the 2004-05 budget, we again have a AAA dividend for our schools in an investment in 17 new school buses for regional areas in South Australia. This extra \$1.32 million is in addition to the 15 new vehicles already purchased for country areas. They include 12 to Eyre Peninsula, two to the Riverland, two to the Mid North and one to the South-East.

These buses are, of course, air-conditioned, because it is essential that in regional areas where it is often quite hot there should be comfortable conditions for schoolchildren. This addition will certainly improve the appearance of that fleet of buses and replaces some buses which are now 17 years old. This increases our investment in rural areas, and I think it will be well received by schools and parents in regional areas.

#### DEPUTY PREMIER'S REMARKS

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Deputy Premier. In the light of the Attorney-General's answer, will the Deputy Premier now apologise to both the house and the Director of Public Prosecutions for saying the following:

You cannot complain about not having the budget increase of your dreams when you do not even write to the Treasurer a letter spelling out what you want.

The Attorney-General has admitted to the house that it was his responsibility to make a submission for extra funding for the DPP's office.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

*Mr Williams interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order, the member for MacKillop! Members know well that any minister can answer on behalf of the government. It is up to the government. The Attorney-General has the call.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** I am responsible for the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and I am very pleased, over my comparatively short stewardship of that office, to have seen the number of full-time equivalents working in the office rise from 67 to 103. I emphasise that figure—67 to 103.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** On a point of order, sir, the question was extremely explicit. The Attorney is debating the issue.

**The SPEAKER:** The Attorney is just starting his answer. He has to have a chance to complete it.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** The DPP went into the media and, let us face it, he rallied his troops in the office. That is what he did—he rallied them. He made an ambit claim for funding well beyond anything that any other agency claimed and well beyond any—

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** On a point of order, the question is: will the government apologise to the house and the DPP? That is the question.

**The SPEAKER:** I take it that the point of order is relevance.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** The short answer is no, and there are reasons why the answer is no. Let me give the house those reasons, because I presume that the opposition would like to hear them. The new DPP sought to rally his troops by making an ambit claim for resources well beyond what any other agency could use and well beyond what his agency could use.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** On a point of order, under standing order 98 the minister is now debating; in fact, by his own words, he says he is going to tell the house why.

**The SPEAKER:** The member has gone beyond a point of order. He raised the point of order—standing order 98—relating to relevancy. I do not believe that the Attorney has gone beyond it yet.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Mr Pallaras made a bid for—wait for it—a \$45 million increase. The department's budget is now a little over \$11 million—up from \$6 million when the Liberal Party was in office—and he was making a bid. We have 103—

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Now, that is the nub of the issue. The member for Davenport says that bid for \$45 million and 110 new prosecutors went to me. It did not.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I rise on a point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** A point of order, the member for Newland. Points of order must not be disruptive; otherwise they will not be permitted.

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** I need a point of clarification. We have a question that relates specifically to misinformation being given to this house by the Deputy Premier.

**The SPEAKER:** Is the point of order relevance?

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** How can the Attorney-General answer that question?

**The SPEAKER:** Is the point of order relevance? If it is relevance, the member should indicate that.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** A bid for \$45 million and 110 new prosecutors, on top of an office with a staff of 103, did not come to me and it did not go into the budget process. It never went into the budget process, because it did not come to me. I will tell you what came to me, if the opposition is interested. What came to me was a bid—

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The members for Mawson, Davenport and Finniss will be named in a minute if they keep defying the chair.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** —for extra money for the historic sex offences; that is, the sex offences that occurred before 1 December 1982. That bid came to me, and it was a bid that was substantially granted. By the way, if the Hon. Robert Lawson had his way, there would be no prosecutions for pre 1 December 1982.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think the Attorney now is clearly debating the issue.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** I have an important supplementary question, sir.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I trust all supplementary questions are important; otherwise they would not be asked.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** Thank you, sir. Would the Attorney-General explain to the house how the DPP could have made submissions during the budget bilateral process when it was completed by the time he commenced work as the DPP?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** The opposition interjected during my last answer, 'Bring back Wendy Abraham.' That will show their attitude to the newly appointed DPP. As a matter of fact, all through the budget process there was an acting DPP who preceded Mr Pallaras, and her name was Ms Wendy Abraham. She was the acting DPP and she managed the budget process. I can assure you, Mr Speaker—

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** I warn the member for Davenport.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** I can assure members that the acting Director of Public Prosecutions did not bid for \$45 million extra and 110 new prosecutors. The first we heard of that was last week.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** I have another supplementary question. If Wendy Abraham was the acting DPP at the time the submissions went in, why has the government today attacked the new DPP, Steve Pallaras, for not putting in a submission?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Instead of an 8 per cent increase (an increase from roughly \$10 million to \$11 million) in the budget for the DPP, a debate is going on—initiated by the incumbent Mr Stephen Pallaras—about whether that increase should be from \$10 million to \$45 million; and that the number of staff employed at the office, which has increased from 67 when members opposite relinquished the reins of office to 103, should now go up to 213. That is the ambit of the discussion. I am proud to have appointed the new Director of Public Prosecutions. He will be there for seven years; he is absolutely independent on the decisions he takes for prosecutions. However, the question of budgets is a matter for the Treasurer, the government and this parliament.

The budget is a matter for debate. The public and members of this house are entitled to debate what the budget for any government agency should be. The DPP is not a sacred cow when it comes to budget matters. The DPP has put in an ambit claim—an ambit claim that was not put in by his predecessor the acting DPP. The government has nothing for which to apologise. The government is managing this economy well and we are not going to give \$45 million and 110 new prosecutors to the office of the DPP because, as much as they are deserving of resources, they would not know what to do with resources like that and the system could not cope with it.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** I have a supplementary question that is very important.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The house will come to order first. The member for Davenport is so close to being named that he is on very thin ice.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** Did the Attorney-General know that the Deputy Premier was going to make that ministerial statement today?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Of course I was aware the Treasurer was going to make a ministerial statement on this topic.

## DEPUTY PREMIER'S REMARKS

**The Hon. I.P. LEWIS (Hammond):** Is the Deputy Premier and Minister for Police aware as to whether or not he is currently being investigated by police for creating false belief and/or criminal defamation with respect to the intemperate and inaccurate, indeed false, remarks that he made about me in recent weeks, and in particular last Friday? If he is under investigation for these crimes, why has he not stood down, as the Attorney-General did and, if he is not, why not?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier):** No, I am not aware of police investigations into me over possible criminal defamations, but I am aware of what I have read in the paper about matters relating to the member for Hammond in that regard.

*The Hon. I.P. Lewis interjecting:*

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

## ARID LANDS NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

**Mr CAICA (Colton):** Will the Minister for Environment and Conservation advise the house how many members of the new Arid Lands Natural Resource Management Board are locals and what skills members residing outside the boundary bring to the board?

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation):** There are in fact nine members of the Arid Lands Natural Resource Management Board. The chairs is Mr Chris Reed, who lives in Burra, so he does not live in the lands but does live in regional South Australia. One other on the board lives just outside the area, at Port Augusta. Four live within the region and three live outside it, one of whom is in Aldgate, one in Peterhead and one in Eden Hills. All members of the board have appropriate skills and experience relating to those arid areas. In fact, the majority, if not all of those not living in that area, have worked or are currently working in that region.

Last week the member for Stuart named one of the members who lives outside the land and said of that member that she has nothing to do with the far north of South Australia. For the record and for the benefit of the 35-year serving member for Stuart, let me inform the house that that particular board member has for more than 10 years been involved in sustainable development in the arid lands. She has completed a PhD in rangelands ecology and in the SA pastoral land—

**The Hon. G.M. Gunn:** Another academic!

**The Hon. J.D. HILL:** The member for Stuart shows that he is not interested in education, in intelligence or in people who have skills: he just wants people who can say they live in a particular area. Not only has this person academic qualifications but she also holds or has held a position in the following organisations: the Pastoral Board of South Australia; the SA chapter of the Australian Rangelands Society, where she is a president; the Soil Conservation Appeal Tribunal; Landcare Australia Rangelands Regional Assessment Panel; and she is a former arid areas water resources committee member.

Other members of the board who live outside the boundary possess equally impeccable credentials in water resources management, Aboriginal heritage, pastoral land management, regional planning and administration. It is worth noting that the Arid Areas Catchment Water Manage-

ment Board, which the member praised in his comments the other day, has only three of its eight members residing in the arid areas region. That is also a good board and has good skills. We have established the board: a majority or at least four of the members live in that area; but all of them have the appropriate skills to make that NRM area work well.

### BUDGET

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Deputy Premier, with his Treasury hat on. Will the Treasurer concede that he has changed the accounting method used so as to hide the fact that the Labor government expects to deliver what would have been a budget deficit in three of the next four years? If the same accounting method was used this year as was used last year, South Australia could have expected a budget deficit in three of the next four years.

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier):** That question shows the former premier's complete lack of understanding of budget reporting, because the net lending result, which is the deficit for which you go into borrow, is the measure on which the budget was presented in the last three years. We also presented that measure in this budget, but we have also presented a net operating balance. The net lending result produced in this budget is the measure by which the other three budgets were presented—nothing changed, nothing hidden. What we have done is to put in there a net operating surplus, which is how most other states present their budgets.

I was up front about that in the very first couple of slides. In front of 100 of South Australia's finest media I was up front about that, and I said, 'This government accepts that we can take on some modest borrowings for infrastructure,' which the opposition has been calling on us to do, 'but we will keep a strong operating surplus,' and that is what we have done. The rating agencies have said that they note the change in reporting and that they see nothing in the budget to alter the AAA rating. However, what they have said is that this government and the opposition are on notice that, if we do not demonstrate continued fiscal discipline, this state's AAA credit rating is at real risk.

That is a challenge for this government and it is a challenge for the opposition; and, up to this point, the opposition has not risen to that challenge, because every shadow minister opposite—be it the shadow minister for education or the shadow minister for police—fixes every problem through spending. They want to cut taxes. The Liberal opposition will be challenged like no other opposition before. Does it want to put at risk the AAA credit rating or not?

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. Clearly, the Treasurer is debating, and he seems to do it all the time. The standing orders must be upheld.

**The SPEAKER:** I agree with that. The deputy leader should talk to the members for Bragg and Davenport and a few other members on his side as well. The Treasurer has finished his answer.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Mr Speaker, I am pointing out a potential breach of standing orders by the Deputy Premier, and I raise that as a valid issue.

**The SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier has concluded his answer. I was pointing out that other members are breaching the standing orders by interjecting all the time. The member for Florey.

### HEPATITIS C

**Ms BEDFORD (Florey):** My question is to the Minister for Health. What is the government doing to better support South Australians with hepatitis C and inform them about new treatment options?

**The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health):** I thank the member for Florey for her question and her interest in this area. Last week I had the pleasure of officially launching South Australia's first Hepatitis C Awareness Week, which is coordinated by the Hepatitis C Council of South Australia. It provided an opportunity for GPs and the general community in South Australia to learn more about hepatitis C management from diagnosis to treatment. Not everyone affected by hepatitis C experiences severe symptoms, but for the many who do the cost to them is considerable: a diminished quality of life; reduced employment opportunities and abilities; social exclusion and discrimination; and frequent and complicated hospital treatments.

All this impacts on their life and on the lives of family and friends. The good news is that the success rate for treatment for the condition continues to improve. A revolutionary antiviral treatment for hepatitis C has been improved with 50 to 80 per cent of people on treatment with these drugs clearing the virus. The management of side effects has also improved, and 90 per cent of people on treatment manage the side effects and complete treatment. That is good news for the people with hep C, as many of these people can now recover from the virus and remain hepatitis C free.

Not everyone needs treatment or is suitable, but for those who are it is good news. Not only are our hospitals and health services doing a great job, but also we are fortunate to have the Hepatitis C Council of South Australia helping out South Australians with hepatitis C. They provide people living with hepatitis C with information about treatment options and how to cope with side effects, a support telephone helpline, support groups and information about how to manage work and prepare family and friends. The council staff and volunteers also provide a strong network of support for people before, during and after treatment. I would like to place on record my thanks to them for their service to people living with hep C.

This week also highlights the role of general practitioners. They are at the front line, from supporting patients at the point of diagnosis right through to ongoing management of treatment. GPs need the latest information, and Hepatitis C Awareness Week was an opportunity to inform the community about the benefits of new treatments that offer huge potential for people with hepatitis C. The approach that we are using in South Australia is to work in partnership with government and non-government services to provide a coordinated approach to prevention strategies and targeting at-risk groups.

### ADVERTISING

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** Will the Premier advise the house how much the government is spending on advertising in the 2005-06 budget?

**The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier):** I am happy to answer that question, sir, because I answered it on Friday. We will get you the exact figures. From memory, the figure I was advised on Friday was a bit over \$200 000. I will get that figure checked. Sir, I have to say that there are some

things that you say and do in opposition which you regret and which you are wrong in saying and doing.

I am prepared to apologise and say publicly that, in opposition, we were wrong to be critical of the Liberal government for advertising, because the merit of communicating how taxpayers' money is being spent is important. It is important to let 250 000 pensioners know that they are getting a \$150 rebate from this government. It is important to let people know that \$200 million of their taxes are being spent on our hospitals. It is important to let people know that we are spending some \$92 million on the disability sector. It is important to let people know that we are spending \$45 million on the mental health sector. This is a good budget, and one that should be shared with all South Australians.

### AQUATIC CENTRE

**Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood):** My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Can the minister update the house on what the government is doing to support aquatic sports in South Australia?

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing):** I thank the member for Norwood for her question. The government has offered the Adelaide City Council \$500 000 to upgrade the Adelaide Aquatic Centre. The funding will assist the Adelaide City Council with retiling the pool, an upgrade of surfaces surrounding the pool and water quality improvements, as part of a larger upgrade involving the refurbishment of the centre's floor, change rooms and toilet facilities, painting and improvements to the swimwear shop and the health club.

In 2002, the government provided a subsidy of \$210 000 per annum CPI indexed for three years to ensure that the aquatic user groups would be able to access the Adelaide Aquatic Centre for training and competition after the previous government had failed to renegotiate the indenture agreement. The government is also negotiating with the Adelaide City Council in looking to finalise the access agreement prior to the expiration of that agreement on 30 June 2005. The moneys committed will benefit both recreation and elite sport users, including diving, water polo, and swimming.

I have said publicly that I am disappointed that the federal government has failed to contribute to the Marion Aquatics Project in its recently announced budget. The government has been consistent in its approach to this significant infrastructure project in saying that it requires support from all three tiers of government—local, state and federal. I have recently spoken and written to the federal Minister for Sport and the federal Minister for Finance reaffirming the state government's commitment of up to \$15 million subject to matched funding from the federal government.

I will continue to pursue the possibility of the federal government joining with the state government and the Marion City Council to make the Marion project a reality. This is a landmark infrastructure development. The commonwealth must play its part. If it is allowed to walk away from this project, the commonwealth will use this as a precedent for not paying its way. The state government remains committed, is in partnership with the Marion City Council and looks forward to the commonwealth playing its part.

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright):** I have a supplementary question, Mr Speaker.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The house will come to order first.

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW:** I have a supplementary question to the minister. Can the minister explain to the house why it was that the City of Marion approached the federal government for funding because his government had not done so?

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** Both the state government and the Marion City Council are at one with this. We look forward to the former shadow minister actually supporting the development of this major infrastructure project. The state government has worked very closely with—

**The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW:** I take a point of order, sir, under standing order 98: the minister was asked a very specific question about why his government did not approach the federal government, and the City of Marion did.

**The SPEAKER:** The member is going beyond the point of order.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** What I can say to the former shadow minister is that I approached the federal minister on a number of occasions over a period of time. This is not a competition between the state government and the Marion City Council. We are at one. This is a major infrastructure project. We look forward to the commonwealth playing a part in this project. We seek for it to match the funding put forward by the state government—up to \$15 million for a landmark infrastructure project.

*Dr McFetridge interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The chair can see quite well from here and the member for Morphet was interjecting.

### INFANT HOMICIDE

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen):** Does the minister accept his department's assessment that there was appropriate assessment, investigation and follow-up intervention in the case of the baby at Victor Harbor, given that the baby subsequently died? Through my questions to the Minister for Health and the Minister for Families and Communities in July last year, it was made clear that a nurse from Every Chance for Every Child visited that family and the family was referred to FAYS (as it was then called) for additional review. In a letter to me on 31 March 2005, responding to my question of 21 July, the minister advised:

There was appropriate assessment, investigation, and follow-up intervention.

**The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities):** I thank the honourable member for her question but it is sad to see this chain of reasoning brought into this house. Let us just explore the chain of reasoning: a child dies and a government agency has been involved with that family; therefore, with the benefit of hindsight, there is some suggestion of some fault on the part of the agency. It is almost inevitably the case that with the benefit of hindsight something else could have been done in this particular case. That is the sad truth about child protection agencies. They come in contact with families where drug and alcohol abuse is an issue, where domestic violence is an issue, where psychiatric illness is an issue and where intellectual disability is an issue. We need them to intervene in the best way that they feel appropriate to try to protect those families. We do not want a child protection agency that fears that, every time it goes near a family that has difficulties and something subsequently goes wrong, it is going to be hauled through the

coals in a place like this. That is where this chain of reasoning takes us.

What has this government done about this? It has set up a structure—and members will have an opportunity to test their credentials in this regard. This government has put before the house a Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee. That is the appropriate place—in a calm, rational atmosphere, with appropriately credentialed experts—to look over child deaths and serious injuries to see what lessons we can learn, not to beat up on poor public servants who manage to intervene in families and try to make good professional judgments. It is appropriate rather to consider, in a calm, dispassionate manner and not in the bear pit of parliament, the way in which we could have intervened better or in which agencies could have collaborated in a more effective fashion.

On the evidence we have, the responses that were made in this case were appropriate. However, we will learn more lessons and this government is prepared to expose itself to learn more lessons about what it could have done better for this family or for other families that have these sad afflictions.

#### NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR

**Ms RANKINE (Wright):** My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What measures are being adopted that support the work force development needs of the not-for-profit community sector?

**The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education):** I would like to thank the member for Wright for her question; her passionate advocacy on behalf of volunteer organisations is well known in this house. I would also like to say that the Premier, as Minister for Volunteers, is obviously making this area a priority.

All of us in this house know the work that the non-government sector and communities provide, and this is why the strategy under the South Australia Works umbrella with regard to employment is, I think, so important. Almost two-thirds of the not-for-profit organisations employ fewer than 20 employees. They rely on their volunteers to deliver their services and, in many cases, they deliver services to some of the most disadvantaged people in our community. In line with our recognition of the valuable role that the non-government sector plays, we have established a traineeship, apprenticeship and cadetship process that is very similar to the one we have in the state public sector.

The state government has committed \$300 000 to the Communityships initiative to provide employment opportunities for five projects, and I know members in this house will be interested to hear about these because they directly affect their constituents. There is the information technology trainees initiative, which will assist in the delivery of community-based computer literacy programs and which will be run through Community Information Strategies Australia and also Digital Bridge. There is the indigenous youth-workers initiative, and this will assist the Port Augusta community youth centre.

There will also be trainees to support the promotion of disability employment awareness, particularly through the Barossa Light Regional Development Board, and indigenous environmental health workers will be trained for the Ceduna Aboriginal community centre. Indigenous land conservation trainees for the Port Lincoln Aboriginal community council will assist with the regeneration of bushfire-affected areas on the Eyre Peninsula and, having had the opportunity to meet

some of the workers involved in the regeneration of the bushfire-affected areas, I know this will be a very important project—and I am sure that the member for Flinders is well aware of the good work that is being done in that area as well.

We look forward to getting the results of this pilot, and I take this opportunity to again emphasise how important it is that we support the non-government not-for-profit sector.

#### APY LANDS

**Mr HANNA (Mitchell):** Why will the Premier not agree to a meeting with the former coordinator of the APY lands, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue?

**The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier):** I met with her a few weeks ago, actually, and we had a very good discussion—but I am quite happy to check the file. I am happy to meet with her at some stage; I have done it many times before.

**Mr Brokenshire:** Are you going to make a governance deal?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The question is whether the member for Mawson will be in the chamber shortly, and that is very doubtful.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

#### DROUGHT RELIEF

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** I was going to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries a question even though he was interjecting—not the Minister for Environment and Conservation; his is coming later. Will the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries give urgent consideration to addressing the difficulties facing drought-affected farmers by providing a freight subsidy for hay carted in those areas of the state? The minister would be aware that the federal government today announced an extra \$250 million, bringing its assistance to over \$2 billion for those affected by drought. Last year, the state government spent only \$2.3 million on drought relief measures.

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries):** I am delighted to receive a question from the elder statesman of the house in relation to what is a serious issue for farming families and farming businesses across the nation. If we face another drought this year, there will be significant suffering. None of us takes drought lightly; we understand what it does to individuals and communities, and we understand that drought on the land means drought in the town. It has an enormous ripple effect whenever our communities are faced with drought. Equally, we understand that, although 'exceptional circumstances' is primarily a federal government responsibility, as state governments, in part of the support package, we work with the federal government.

The biggest element of drought assistance is assistance to the families, and the threshold has been changed. In asking the question, the honourable member indicated that today the federal government announced significant changes to the drought package; however, he did not point to another important part, namely, the threshold of off-farm income—off-farm assets—in terms of families receiving welfare benefits, which are, obviously, always the biggest part of the package.

The other two components relate to communities and capacity building and the farm business. To date, the biggest single support for farm businesses has been interest rate



subsidies, which have been subsidised to 50 per cent and to which the state government has made a contribution. The states have not yet had discussions with the federal government on what may be—

**Mr Brokenshire:** Freight subsidies for hay.

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN:** I am sure that the honourable member who asked the question would like a briefing about the other circumstances. He is interested in more than just the specific question. Of course, the interjector made an inane comment about what the state did—

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker: it is disorderly to reply to interjections.

**The SPEAKER:** The honourable member is correct—and it is disorderly to make the interjection in the first place. The Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries has the call.

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN:** At this stage, we have not explored exactly what combination of support state and federal governments will offer communities EC declared. In South Australia, we do not have any EC declarations before the federal government, other than those extended from the previous declarations. I add that it was due to the strong lobbying by the member for Stuart that, in this state, we added a mental health component—

**Mr Brokenshire:** Good member.

**The Hon. R.J. McEWEN:** And, I add, good minister for appreciating that these are complex issues and go beyond business subsidies to support for families and mental health issues that arise because of the stress these families are under. I refer to the issue of freight subsidies for stock or fodder either to be removed from or returned to drought areas. The difficulty is lack of access to fodder. Members might remember that, for the Eyre Peninsula bushfires, we put in place significant transport support for all volunteered fodder, to the extent that now other farming communities are under stress because they donated significant fodder which they find they need in the approaching drought circumstances in this state.

I have already had discussions with the South Australian Farmers Federation and alerted it to the fact that we may need to put a task force in place in this state. I asked the federation to nominate a senior member so that we can immediately activate that task force. Having said that, let us hope like hell that it rains in the next fortnight so that we do not have to face drought circumstances in this state

#### CRIME PREVENTION INITIATIVES

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens):** Will the Attorney-General inform the house about recent crime prevention initiatives in South Australia?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design is an approach to crime prevention that aims at reducing opportunities that increase the likelihood of crime being committed. It is based on the idea that people's behaviour within the urban environment, particularly their likelihood of committing crimes, is influenced by the design of that environment. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design applies a range of design initiatives or principles to an area to minimise its potential to support criminal behaviour. Streets and pavements—

*Mr Brokenshire interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** The member for Mawson may wonder where these principles are applied, and I will tell him. I refer to streets and pavements, parking spaces—

*Mr Brokenshire interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Mawson will be named if he transgresses one more time. The Attorney-General has the call.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** —office buildings, especially for site planning and car parking, public toilets, informal gathering areas, shopping malls and shopping centres, convenience stores, flats and schools.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** What about Don Dunstan? Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design is best achieved at the planning stages, and there are nine principles. Let me enumerate them.

**Ms Chapman:** Turn on the lights?

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Lighting—the member for Bragg gets it right—site lines, ownership of space, entrapment spots—

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** No; we have dealt with that one—signage, movement predictors, landscaping—I guess that is shrubs—land activity use, and maintenance and management. During the past few months, staff from the Crime Prevention Unit (still going strong) and the SAPOL Crime Reduction Section have drafted a one-day Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design package that will be delivered to interested groups, beginning with the police and government departments. The training package explains what a site assessment is—

*Mr Scalzi interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hartley is warned.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** —why a site assessment should be performed and how to complete one. The training package also contains photographs and site videos that demonstrate visual examples of the best and worst of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design practices and approaches. I am pleased to advise the house that the training package was trialled with SAPOL's Sturt local service area; that is because this government looks after the South. It was trialled last month—

**Mr Brokenshire:** That is not the South: that is South-West. The South is further south than that.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** The member for Mawson says the Sturt local service area is not the South. They will be surprised to hear that.

**The SPEAKER:** He will be named shortly.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** It was trialled among Neighbourhood Watch zone leaders, local councils and police officers. I commend the package to the house.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I have a point of order. Ministers are supposed to address the substance of the question. There is an opportunity for ministerial statements, and some of us are waiting for the cowl.

**The SPEAKER:** I believe the Attorney kept pretty close to the subject, which was of great interest to most members.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Poor things; how were you so underprivileged in your upbringing?

#### WORKCOVER

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Why have the number of active claims on WorkCover's books increased by 820 over the past 12 months? Given the number of new claims reported, it has actually fallen by 446 over the same period.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations):** It may well have something to do with the state of the economy. The economy is booming, and that could well be a factor.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** I have a supplementary question.

**The SPEAKER:** The leader seeks a supplementary. I point out that the opposition has had four supplementary questions already.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** I am asking the minister why there are 1200 more long-term claims on the books than there were 12 months ago, and I cannot see what that has to do with the economy.

**The SPEAKER:** Does the Minister for Industrial Relations wish to answer or add to it?

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** I will seek some information for the leader and report back to him.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Why did the recently released WorkCover quarterly performance report not give details of the unfunded liability ratio; and will the minister confirm the unfunded liability ratio has fallen again in the March quarter? WorkCover's December quarterly performance report showed the unfunded liability ratio had worsened over the quarter down to 60 per cent. This level is some 40 per cent behind WorkCover's own target level. WorkCover's March quarterly performance report failed to list the unfunded liability ratio.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations):** The government has reported previously that it is trying to ensure that the building blocks are in place to improve the mess left by the previous government. As I have reported to the house previously—

*Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Kavel will come to order!

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** —those building blocks include a new board, a new CEO—

*The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:*

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

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** —and a new executive management team. I have also reported that there will be bumps in the information that we receive about the unfunded liability, but, generally speaking, we are pleased that the new board is starting to get the business under control. With regard to what was reported and what was not reported in the quarterly report to which the member for Davenport refers, I am happy to seek some information regarding that. However, I have also informed the house previously that the information on which the government relies is the actuarial reports which we receive twice a year.

That is the vital information; that is the important information on which we should rely. These quarterly reports certainly may well provide some indications, but the vital information on which we can rely are the actuarial reports which are provided twice a year. That information is backed by the work of the actuaries, and that is the information on which we should rely.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** My question is again to the Minister for Industrial Relations. What is the minister doing to stop WorkCover failing 12 out of 13 of its own benchmark targets? WorkCover's own quarterly performance report

details 13 benchmarks that can be accurately measured from quarter to quarter. The March 2004 report showed that WorkCover failed seven of the 13 benchmark targets. The most recent report shows that WorkCover had slipped further behind in the past 12 months, now failing 12 of the 13 benchmark targets.

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** The board has some ambitious targets. As I have reported previously and as I said in my earlier answer, particularly with the quarterly reports—

*Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Kavel will come to order!

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** —there will be peaks and troughs regarding the information with which we are provided—and the board and the government do not hide behind that. The previous government left WorkCover in a mess. This board is working towards getting the business under control. There will be peaks and troughs from time to time, as I have said, it is important that this board is getting the business under control.

## LAW FIRMS

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the Attorney-General. Are law firms and lawyers leaving Adelaide because of the government's anti-lawyer vendetta? *The Financial Review* of 20 May 2005 reported that major law firm Clayton Utz closed their Adelaide office, and another major firm is making nine of its 42 partners redundant. *The Financial Review* stated:

Major corporate clients in Adelaide are increasingly taking their work interstate, and a decision by South Australian WorkCover to negotiate an exclusive deal with Minter Ellison for its work is expected to shake up the Adelaide market even further.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General):** It seems to me that many in Adelaide are too precious about the remarks that the Premier makes from time to time about lawyers. It is worth remembering that most lawyers are not criminal lawyers. In fact, the great majority of lawyers are not criminal lawyers. Of those criminal lawyers, many are prosecutors, so the number of people likely to be offended by the Premier's remarks about criminal defence lawyers is very small indeed.

**Mr Brokenshire:** That's not true, because I've spoken to them.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Apparently, the member for Mawson has spoken to the 3 000 lawyers with practising certificates in South Australia, has done his own poll and knows what they think!

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** I go to a lot of functions around the legal profession. Some of them deplore the remarks the Premier has made, particularly those about Mr Grant Algy being mullet-headed. Others expressed to me their support, because lawyers, like the rest of the population, have differing views about the criminal justice system. The Leader of the Opposition talked about a law firm packing up and leaving Adelaide, and that was Clayton Utz. I may be mistaken, but Clayton Utz has always been a big civil law firm. It may have a little criminal practice on the side, but my suspicion is that it does not have a criminal practice.

The other firm that has been laying off staff because the business is not coming in is Thomson Playford. Again, Thomson Playford did not make its reputation through crime: it made it through commercial law. That is what it practises

in. I think that some of that business is going to other firms because the market for legal services in South Australia is more competitive than it has ever been. I will say one other thing. A lot of lawyers in this state, including the Law Society, were very relieved when the Labor government came to office in this state. The Hon. K.T. Griffin and his collaborators in the previous (Liberal) government were shipping government legal work interstate. Who did the previous government employ on the ETSA contracts? It exported our work from South Australia.

The whole idea that Clayton Utz is packing up and leaving South Australia (if that is true) and that Thomson Playford is putting off lawyers because the Premier said something nasty about criminal defence lawyers is infantile.

### WORKCOVER

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** Will the Minister for Industrial Relations confirm that a former claims agent has pulled out of negotiations to renew its contract with WorkCover and that it has done so due to total disenchantment with the government's handling of WorkCover?

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations):** No, I will not claim that whatsoever. I understand that VERO has taken a business decision not to participate in centrally-funded workers' compensation schemes. The member for Davenport and others on the opposite side scoff, but it is also my understanding that it has done a similar thing in New South Wales. It has made a business decision, a commercial—

*The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** Exactly, because they are centrally-funded workers' compensation schemes.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:** No, I will not. VERO's decision not to participate in centrally funded workers' compensation schemes means that it will not be applying for further contracts in New South Wales or in South Australia.

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### PARLIAMENTARY TABLE OFFICERS

**The SPEAKER:** I inform the house that I have approved some changes in allocation of duties for table officers. The most obvious will be that, from tomorrow, the position of Sergeant-at-Arms will be attached to that of the Clerk Assistant rather than the Deputy Clerk and, from time to time, the Clerk Assistant or parliamentary officers will assist the Chairman of Committees during committee consideration of bills.

### COUNTRY DOCTORS

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

Leave granted.

**The Hon. L. STEVENS:** I would like to put on record the Rann Labor government's commitment to supporting doctors in country South Australia. This government understands how important it is for country communities to have access to quality health care, and that is why we have just announced a major \$27.2 million package of initiatives to improve living and working conditions for our country doctors. What is really important about this package is the involvement and

participation of country doctors themselves in talking to us and letting us know about the specific challenges facing rural health workers.

This four-year package is the result of a groundbreaking consultation process, which involved drawing on the experience and expertise of 185 doctors who are currently practising in country South Australia. This package of improvements covers the whole gamut of issues facing country doctors, including both financial and non-financial issues such as lifestyle, training and education. This package is fully funded in the state budget. The 2005-06 budget for country health is \$372 million, up by \$44 million (or 13.4 per cent) from the 2004-05 budget.

This package genuinely represents the start of a new partnership with rural doctors. To increase our opportunity for success in identifying the issues and finding appropriate solutions, the peak bodies representing country doctors were invited to participate in the process right from the beginning. Together, the reference group and the Department of Health embarked on a process to meet with as many country doctors as possible to discuss with them first-hand what issues influenced their decision making regarding working in the country.

Invitations were issued to all resident rural doctors and specialists advising them of the intention to visit any location in country where discussions could occur. The response was overwhelming and, in February and March, the group, including representatives of the peak bodies (who themselves are practising country doctors), took to the road and visited 38 sites and met with 185 doctors. This was a unique opportunity for government peak bodies and the resident general practitioners and specialists of country South Australia to come together and talk. Whilst this seems simple, it is the first time that country doctors have experienced being asked quite directly what they think, how they feel, what would make them stay and what would make them go. Key features of the four-year package include:

- increased on-call and other allowances;
- improved locum (relief) services for overworked doctors;
- increased further development and training support for country GPs and specialists and scholarships for country students, as well as country-based hospital internships;
- special telephone disruption allowance;
- increased relocation grants;
- establishment of a Country Education, Work Force Planning and Coordination Forum; and
- better support for overseas-trained doctors.

There will be new opportunities for medical interns to train in the country and for more specialist training to occur in the country as well. We have also addressed the desire for better networking of country doctors with each other and with their city counterparts. I am confident that this is the start of a long and healthy partnership with doctors in country South Australia, and further information on this package is available on the web at [www.countryhealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.countryhealth.sa.gov.au). The package also includes initiatives in:

- country medical governance;
- partnerships between health regions and GPs;
- clinical networks; and
- information technology.

I would like to thank those doctors and health care workers who participated in the whole process and the bodies that helped with the consultation process, including the Rural Doctors Association of South Australia, the South Australian

Divisions of General Practice, the AMA and the Rural Doctors Work Force Agency.

### RADIOTHERAPY SERVICES

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

Leave granted.

**The Hon. L. STEVENS:** Last week, the Deputy Leader raised a matter in this place concerning radiotherapy services at the Flinders Medical Centre and the requirement for public patients to pay Medicare gaps for services and treatment received there. The only public radiotherapy service in South Australia is provided at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Flinders Medical Centre does not provide public radiotherapy services.

The Adelaide Radiotherapy Centre (Southern Branch) is a private service, located within the Flinders Private Hospital complex, and services provided there attract gap payments in the usual way. This service has been in place since March 1999, and was established in the time of the former state government when the Deputy Leader was minister. People who wish to access radiotherapy services in the south may choose to attend the Adelaide Radiotherapy Centre at the Flinders Private Hospital complex and pay the associated costs, or go to the Royal Adelaide Hospital where the public radiotherapy service is free. The Rann Labor government is committed to the development of a Cancer Control Plan for South Australia, which will seek to identify improved access for public patients to radiotherapy in the north and the south as a priority.

### GRIEVANCE DEBATE

#### STUART, MEMBER FOR

**The SPEAKER:** I call on the member for Stuart.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart):** I am happy that people are pleased with my attendance, and I look forward to their being as equally pleased after 18 March next year. I look forward to it. May I say, as I look at my colleague, the member here, that when I first came to this place I sat next to his father, who was most progressive farmer, and a man of conservative views. As I walked up the steps of Parliament House this afternoon, having driven down from Port Augusta, I must say that I felt less apprehensive than I did the first time I walked up them, many years ago. I was fully aware of what was ahead of me today.

One of the things that I have come to appreciate in this place is that one should not get too excited because it does not do one's blood pressure much good—but one should be very persistent. This is a great institution. For people who are fortunate enough to be elected here it is a privilege, and to get higher office is an honour, and they should always respect it. We are all here at the will of the electorate, and it should be the right of the electors to send us back here and to get rid of us. Our system of government, of course, is so superior to all others.

In my time in this particular place I have seen many changes, and I have seen an improvement in facilities for members. I think one of the worst aspect that I have seen is one or two members of parliament on a regular basis trying to downgrade the role of members of parliament. For their own short-term publicity they undermine the benefits and

facilities of members of parliament, and try to make political capital out of the matter of providing adequate and effective resources for members. When one compares with what the senior public service, or people in private enterprise get, which is the normal—when a modest attempt is made to improve the resources of members of parliament you get this outcry from one or two people, which I think is appalling. All I hope is that those people who continue with that line do not receive the confidence of the community, because they are actually attacking the community by making members of parliament less effective.

In my case, I have represented a huge part of South Australia; I suppose it is about 90 per cent. When I first became a member, it went down nearly to Lake Hamilton, which is on the edge of the District Council of Elliston. I have represented down as far as Gladstone, right out to the West Australian border, and the whole of the Northern Territory border. It has changed around a bit now; I have a more compact electorate. I concede to the member for Giles that she currently has the largest electorate in South Australia.

When I first came in, I lived on a party line. There were no mobile telephones, no satellite phones, no electoral offices, no lap-top computers, and those things. I suppose they have been a great improvement, but the most important thing is that we have improved the facilities in northern Australia and in the rural areas. There is a lot more to be done, but the greatest help and assistance that I have had in my time is on the two occasions where I was fortunate enough to have someone drive me around. If you want to help members of parliament, particularly in large electorates, that is the best assistance that you can give them, and it is a safety factor—and this is somebody who has driven over 100 000 kilometres per year, worn out lots of motor cars, whacked lots of kangaroos and emus, run into wombats and all sorts of things and, of course, never exceeded the speed limit, and who, of course, has been a very cautious driver.

In conclusion, I would not have been able to continue in parliament for 35 years without the support of my family, my wife and my children, and those people who have worked in my offices, and also a very large number of people in my electorate who have supported me, guided me, and ensured that I have continued to come here, and I look forward to the next four and a half years.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

#### HAMMOND, MEMBER FOR

**Ms BREUER (Giles):** I congratulate the member for Stuart on his 35 years and say what a pleasure it has been to serve with him in my time here. We have been keen adversaries in that time, and very willing to have a go at each other at every opportunity, but I do have a great regard and a very fond regard for the member for Stuart, and he has certainly been a very good member for his electorate and for the northern part of the state, a part of the state which I know is certainly very dear to the hearts of both of us. So, congratulations again, member for Stuart, you have done a great job in your 35 years.

On Friday and Saturday I was home, and I moved around my electorate and became very concerned about the number of comments made in relation to the behaviour of the member for Hammond, and the perception that he is still connected to the Labor government. The member for Stuart commented that it is a privilege and an honour to be elected to this place, and I agree with him that it is, but I also believe that it has a

responsibility. I am very aware of standing order 127, which says that a member may not impute improper motives to any other member or make personal reflections on any other member. I certainly do not wish to do this, but there is an element of self-preservation for myself and for other members of the government in this place and, indeed, I believe for all members of parliament in this place. The claims and comments made by the member for Hammond are becoming more personal and more bizarre every week, and I refer to comments made in relation to the member for Torrens last Wednesday—

**The Hon. I.P. LEWIS:** On a point of order: the honourable member, by her own acknowledgment, refers to standing order 127 and immediately begins to slag off at me, other than through substantive motion. I ask you to rule as to whether it is possible, then, to forgo the standing order and the convention, which has been upheld in this parliament to this point regarding improper reflections on members—grievance debate is not a time in which you can slag off at any member, as far as I am aware.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Standing order 127 does not allow the member to accuse another member of misconduct or things of that nature. She is allowed to be critical of another member, otherwise there would not be much purpose in us being here. So, I am listening to what the member for Giles says very closely. She is on thin ice. I will listen closely to what she says, and if I think that she infringes standing order 127, I will pull her up.

**The Hon. I.P. LEWIS:** On seeking further clarity on the point, may I discover from you whether you see a difference between attacking the advocacy and policy of a member, as distinct from the personality and character of the member?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will leave it with what I have said so far, but I will listen to what the member for Giles says, and if I think she infringes standing order 127 I will pull her up.

**Ms BREUER:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker; I would expect you to do so. I refer to comments concerning the member for Torrens made in this place last week by the member for Hammond, when he said that:

The honourable member for Torrens does not mind. . . she will not mind if it is her husband who dies and the car gets wrecked—

The member for Torrens was most upset about this comment and is still upset—in fact, I discussed it with her again this morning, and once again she became visibly upset when talking about this. But, the member for Hammond has still not apologised to the member for Torrens.

On Thursday last week we heard his comments on the tragic murder that occurred in Smithfield last week, when the member for Hammond said:

I say now to the house that there is a stench of the most heinous kind arising from these crimes and associated activities which comes right into this place and into the frontbench, and in other high places also. . .

He went on to say:

May God rest the souls of those who have been murdered and may God forgive those in this place who could have prevented it had they dealt honestly, frankly and sincerely in the public interest and have chosen to put their self interest and survival ahead of the lives of those—

I found that most offensive and very disparaging of all members in this place, particularly of the Labor government. The link to members on this side is absolutely inexcusable. How dare he make these suggestions—and publicly make

these suggestions! We have been tainted for months by the implication that there is a cover-up in this place by the Labor government of murder, paedophilia and threats to lives.

The member for Torrens commented on the increased sexual connotations in the member for Hammond's speeches, and a classic example was in the debate on double demerit points. His comments about wiring up the gonads of young men were, I thought, most offensive and bizarre and an insult to all young men who were labelled by him.

In the past the member for Hammond has been treated with humour for some of his speeches, which include his classic 'duck in a log' speech and his 'shooting of a male' in some undisclosed war zone. We have treated him with humour and tolerance but I do not think it is possible to do this any longer. He should not be protected under standing order 127 where we are not able to say what we feel.

The member for Torrens suggested on Thursday that the member for Hammond should talk to someone about his continued sexual references and the comments he has been making recently and that perhaps he should seek treatment, and I agree with this.

There was a recent allegation in this place about a physical attack on a staff member of this place that has gone very quiet. He made the suggestion in Mount Gambier that Eugene McGee was treated differently because of his supposed links with a paedophile ring and, again, was supposedly linked to this place and covered up by those in this place in government. I read the speech that the member for Hammond made at the Press Club with the allegations about current sitting members—most bizarre.

I am not prepared to be tarred by this man. He has taken away the dignity of this place. His outrageous statements are unforgivable and I believe that these should no longer be happening.

Time expired.

#### GAWLER HEALTH SERVICE

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light):** I rise today to inform the house a little more on the problems we are having in Gawler, particularly the Gawler Health Service, via the protracted negotiations of the contracts of Dr Rattray and Dr Cave, the obstetrician and gynaecologist attached to the Gawler Health Service.

Last week I presented a petition to the house of some 5 235 signatures calling upon the government, in particular the Minister for Health, to negotiate a new contract. The doctors' current contract expires on 31 December. They commenced negotiations back in October 2003, would you believe—that is 18 months ago that they commenced negotiations, wanting to renew their contract.

*The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:*

**The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:** That is right, Deputy Leader. This is appalling and, in fact, at a public meeting that I arranged last Wednesday night the doctors mentioned that the CEO of the Health Department, Mr Jim Birch, had spoken with Dr Cave on the Saturday prior to the Wednesday night and told him that there had been a management bungle. They are not the exact words but it was terrible management—atrocious management—that had been undertaken here. These two doctors live and work in Gawler, and they want to stay there. Yet, there has been haggling over their contract and, in fact, in the three days prior to Wednesday, every day they received a new contract, with the statements therein changed slightly. However, it is not realised that both doctors have

been on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. The new contract gives them just 34 days of time off out of 365. It is the major sticking point, and negotiations are continuing.

The public meeting was very much behind both Dr Rattray and Dr Cave. I invited the minister (Hon. Lea Stevens) to attend; she did so and listened to what was put forward at the meeting. She gave an undertaking that she would ask Jim Birch to intervene and take a personal interest in negotiating the contracts of Dr Cave and Dr Rattray, and I thank her for that. I hope she will keep an eye on this issue, because these contracts need to be determined within the next couple of weeks. Uncertainty has been created, and patients of both Dr Cave and Dr Rattray are expecting babies in early January, yet neither doctor can tell their patients whether or not they will be there. It is a very serious situation for those involved, because I know from experience, as my wife and I went through the birth of our two children, that a very close relationship develops between a woman and her obstetrician.

I note with interest the \$27.2 million package to support country doctors, about which the minister made a statement at the end of question time today. I encourage her to use some of that money to keep these two doctors in Gawler, as they are part of the Wakefield health region. They are very willing to consider discussions among other obstetricians and to work together in order to achieve a good outcome for the whole Wakefield region. The people of Gawler are particularly passionate about this issue, as it is very difficult to get obstetricians and gynaecologists to country locations. If these two gentlemen cannot negotiate a reasonable contract to the their satisfaction and that of the department, Gawler is at risk of losing them—and that would be a very backward step indeed, as some 400 births have occurred in the past 12 months.

### TRADE, AUSTRALIA AND CHINA

**Mr O'BRIEN (Napier):** In my last grievance, I raised concerns relating to Australia's trade performance. In particular, I focused on how Australia's trade relationship with China was having a negative effect on Australia's balance of trade. Today, I focus on the impact that trade with China is having on the Australian manufacturing sector, a sector that has had a pivotal role to play in the prosperity of Australia and, in particular, in that of our state.

Immediately after World War II, manufacturing production accounted for around 41 per cent of total South Australian production. However, by 1965, this figure had risen to about 60 per cent of total production. Manufacturing remains a significant contributor to the state's economy, accounting for around 50 per cent of total gross state production, but it is currently under threat. This is evident by the dramatic decline that has occurred in manufacturing employment. In 1965, manufacturing employment was approximately 28 per cent of total employment in South Australia; however, today it is a low 14 per cent. Many manufacturing jobs have been lost over this period—an occurrence that has had a devastating impact within my electorate. I think it is a major contributor to the fact that I have second and third generation unemployment in my electorate.

The declining significance of manufacturing within Australia is a trend that most other developed countries have fought hard to avoid. Australia is one of the few developed nations that has had a significant decline in its manufacturing

share of GDP. In fact, Australia's manufacturing share of GDP has fallen from 16 per cent at the end of the 1980s to 12.8 per cent in March 2003, while China's has grown to 35 per cent. No other compatible nation has such a low base as Australia. The reduction of Australia's manufacturing share of GDP has brought about a sharp decline in manufactured exports, and this, in turn, has had a negative effect on Australia's trade performance; this is particularly pertinent to South Australia where we are pushing for a threefold increase in our exports. Between the years 2001 and 2003, the value of Australia's manufactured exports fell more than \$7.8 billion. Furthermore, the share of Australian manufactured goods sold overseas has fallen from 26 per cent to around 21 per cent—undoing the growth of the nineties.

Even more disturbing is the poor performance Australia has had in its export of elaborately transformed manufacturers. From 1988 to 1994, Australia averaged an annual growth rate of 17.7 per cent in elaborately transformed manufactured exports. This sound figure has dramatically declined to a mere 1.8 per cent under the Howard government. If Australia is to maintain high standards of living and acceptable levels of medium and long-term economic growth, it is imperative that more is done to support our manufacturing sector. In particular, we should be looking to promote strategic, high value-added manufacturing industries which have seen a staggering decline in growth under the Howard government. Strategic, high value-added manufacturing industries are those which produce products which are skill, knowledge and innovation intensive. Such industries are extremely beneficial, as they transfer leading edge technologies to the local economy through the development of skills, organisation and managerial techniques which, in turn, spill over to the rest of the economy through labour turnover and supply chain networks.

The government is to be commended for the decision contained in this budget to contribute \$8 million over four years to establish the Mawson Institute for Advanced Manufacturing—a joint venture between UniSA and the CSIRO—to be located at Mawson Lakes. Australia, like all other developed nations, should support and protect its manufacturing sector as it plays a vital role in research and development and, therefore, has great implications for the prosperity of this nation, particularly South Australia.

The consequences of a continued trade deficit and decline in the manufacturing sector are grave. The AMWU has predicted that, if nothing is done to protect the manufacturing sector under the current climate, there will be a potential loss of 400 000 jobs, \$7 billion in tax revenue and an increase of almost \$5 billion for welfare payments. To avoid such a scenario, Australia must be looking to support its manufacturing base, rather than destroying it through poorly considered trade negotiations. The federal Liberal government has done little to protect this vital sector of the economy. What is more, it appears that the federal government is unwilling to assist this sector into the future.

Time expired.

### BUS CONTRACTS

**The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland):** I want to speak about the recent transfer of bus contracts in Adelaide, which has been a nightmare for many of the drivers formerly employed by Serco. This government and its ministers should be thoroughly ashamed of the way in which its workers have been treated. Even the Minister for Health has claimed that

her portfolio got into the transport portfolio debacle. Despite a personal written assurance from the Minister for Health that no bus driver would be refused a job under the new arrangements, the reality is that many drivers have been left high and dry without work because of a range of dubious decisions. To qualify my statement from the Minister for Health's letter, let me quote her from a letter to a constituent, who was a bus driver in the previous Serco system. She said:

I am advised that all drivers will have the opportunity to reapply for their jobs at St Agnes and that no driver will be forced to sign an Australian workplace agreement, nor will any driver be refused a job under the new arrangements.

That statement is not worth the paper it was written on, which is shameful. When a cabinet minister makes such a categorical statement, one would expect that it would be true. Torrens Transit and Southlink took over the same routes as previously serviced by Serco, and theoretically should have required the same number of drivers as employed by the previous contractor.

Unfortunately, the truth is that many experienced, responsible bus drivers have been denied work. They have been told that they are too fat, unfit or that no jobs are available for them. They were perfectly capable of driving a bus before the new contractors took over, yet suddenly overnight they became obsolete. I find that extremely hard to believe. I have been contacted by many drivers who have been refused employment by Southlink and Torrens Transit, and all feel betrayed by the state government because of the way in which it has handled the reletting of contracts and its failure to protect the livelihood of drivers. A sense of frustration has built because of inconsistencies in the new contractors' requirements between individual drivers.

Some have been refused work because they are too fat, while others have been offered jobs if they lose weight within a specified time. Some drivers have been offered jobs quickly, while others have been made to wait for weeks and even months. Others have been told that all drivers would be re-employed, despite rumours that the successful companies were in fact training their own complement of drivers. In an amazing contradiction, one of my constituents was refused a job by Torrens Transit because he was told that he was unfit, even though he had passed a medical fitness test to meet the requirements of Transport SA for a heavy-vehicle licence and had passed with flying colours. This man previously drove heavy transport to Broken Hill three times a week and unloaded produce by hand. He had driven buses for Serco for more than a year and had been passed by Transport SA to drive heavy semitrailers, yet Torrens Transit has informed him that suddenly he has a bad back.

I am not sure whether the former minister for transport failed to read the tender documents properly, but somehow this government has failed in its duty of care for workers in an industry that is vital to Adelaide's transport system. The uncertainty created by the state government has placed an unnecessary emotional and financial strain on hundreds of workers and their families and, quite frankly, these people deserved a lot better from this Labor government. Many were unsure what to do or whether they would continue even to have a job. Even weeks after the official handover, many are still waiting to hear whether they will be re-employed by the new contractors.

I can only say to members that awarding this particular transport system to new contractors has proven to be quite disastrous for many of the families who have spoken to me about the problems that they have when they are without

salary or money and who can find no work or positions at this point, even though they had been assured that those jobs would still be theirs. The feeling engendered by this betrayal by the state government is best summed up by one disgruntled driver who said, 'Good old Labor has screwed the workers again.'

There was also a matter of a TAFE course and an apprenticeship that had been undertaken during the period of the Serco contract. The question is now whether the government will honour that apprenticeship, even though there has been no contact whatsoever with some of the people who had taken up these apprenticeships under the TAFE scheme in accordance with the contract that they were under at the time.

Time expired.

## ORGAN DONATION

**Ms THOMPSON (Reynell):** Yesterday I had the honour to represent the Minister for Health at a service of remembrance and reflection in relation to organ donation and transplantation. The order of the day says, 'For all those touched by organ donation and transplantation'. I think that that is now probably everyone in the community. Certainly, as you are well aware, Mr Deputy Speaker, we in the Labor Party were all touched by the kidney transplant of our former secretary, Kay Sutherland, and grateful for the extra years that that transplant brought her, although sorry that it was not ultimately successful in allowing her to live a long and healthy life. She died some four or five years ago now.

The service was a very special one. It recognised the depth of feeling and emotion experienced by all those involved in organ transplant and donation. It was beautifully conducted by Philip Satchell and supported by wonderful music from Candela and Friends. The most moving part, however, was hearing from those directly involved in the whole process. There was a reading by Lynette Young, an eye donor family representative, of a reading simply called 'Like a pebble.' There was a reading from Michele Smith, a corneal transplant recipient. There was also a presentation from Ngair Merritt, who spoke on behalf of donor families. She spoke of the difficulty that their family experienced when the young son, who had been a healthy, happy, family-loving person, developed Q fever and subsequently the associated depression, which led to his taking his own life.

But they knew that he wanted to be a donor. He had talked about being a registered donor at the time he got his driver's licence at 18, so the family well knew his wishes and were pleased that at that horrible time for them they were able to give new life and hope to five other people. There was also a moving presentation from Elka Johansson, who was the recipient of a heart transplant. She was only 18 when she went through that very traumatic experience. She was inspired to do so having seen her mother die of the same congenital condition at 39. Elka has indeed had a very difficult life, and the way she presented herself at St Peter's Cathedral yesterday indicated a great depth and strength of character and an amazing understanding of the human condition and the value of life.

During the thanksgiving service, the whole range of people involved in transplants was recognised. There were thanks given for those who had donated and for the families of donors; for those who had wanted to donate but whose wish could not be fulfilled at the time of their death; thanks for the successful transplants and a prayer that, in their

recovery, they may regain strength and renewed hope for the future. There was recognition of those awaiting transplants; those who received transplants but who, sadly, did not survive or those who died in waiting; and a special thanks for all the health professionals involved in the care and support of those touched by organ donation and transplantation. This is something that we can all engage in by committing ourselves to being available as an organ donor in the event of our death.

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### SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

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

That the time for the bringing up of the report of the committee be extended to Monday 4 July 2005.

Motion carried.

**The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the house.

*A quorum having been formed:*

### APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.  
(Continued from 26 May. Page 2783.)

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition):** I stand here disappointed at what was delivered here last week as a budget. I am disappointed not for myself but for the people of South Australia. I am disappointed by the missed opportunity that this sad and sorry document represents—a missed opportunity which the Treasurer promotes as his crowning achievement.

When one looks beyond the spin one can see that this Rann/Foley budget is just about everything else the Rann government does—it is all smoke and mirrors. I should have thought that, coming up to an election, a Treasurer with sky-rocketing income would have done something dramatic for the state. I should have thought that an astute Treasurer might have offered the electorate a few sweeteners—something to make them think that he is on the ball and that he knows what he is doing. But, I am afraid, that is not the case.

This Treasurer this year had access to \$2.2 billion more than the Hon. Rob Lucas (the last Liberal treasurer) had when he presented the 2001-02 budget. That is \$42 million a week more than the last government had in its last budget and \$6 million a day more than the last government had. What is the government doing with it? Quite apart from the fact that the Treasurer has \$2.2 billion more, this Treasurer has not had to grapple year after year with \$10 billion of State Bank and other debt run up by Labor.

The Hon. Mr Lucas did not have the opportunities that our current Treasurer has had. If he had found himself in the same position as this Treasurer, I am sure that the Hon. Mr Lucas would have made the most of it, and not frittered away the opportunities as the current Treasurer has. Unfortunately, this Treasurer has done little more than watch the dollars come in one door and fly out the other, without anything of consequence happening in between.

We hear a lot from the Premier and the Treasurer about the AAA rating, but their chest beating has no credibility. The two major factors in gaining the AAA rating were the sale of ETSA and the GST, both of which were opposed by both the Premier and the Treasurer. Without these two initiatives there would be no AAA rating. It is about time the Premier and the Treasurer were honest about this issue. This government also created a new taxation phenomenon—so-called tax cuts that actually raise a lot more revenue; tax cuts that actually cost you more. Only the Rann/Foley government could make such a silly claim, and they are out there advertising that there are \$1.5 billion of tax cuts in this budget. What an outrageous attempt to mislead South Australians.

What is even worse is the fact that taxpayers must fund this appalling dishonesty. They have to pay to be misled. For instance, they are being told that there are \$1.5 billion in tax cuts in this budget. What they are not being told is that the most significant of these so-called tax cuts do not come into effect until 2009-10. Now there is a minor omission from the advertising—perhaps a proof reader missed that one in checking the ad!

Last year the Treasurer was boasting about tax cuts of \$350 million, but the small print showed that they would be phased in over four years. What the Treasurer did not tell anyone was that half the total was for the abolition of the bank accounts debits tax, none of which would take effect in 2004-05. What the Treasurer also did not tell us was that those changes were agreed to not by the Rann government but by the former Liberal government as part of the GST deal, which the Labor Party opposed. The only significant claim within the \$350 million that referred to 2004-05 was a slight change in payroll tax—a very slight change that still saw payroll tax rise by more than inflation in the last year. That is not a tax cut at all.

Likewise, we have heard both the Premier and the Treasurer talk about enormous cuts to land tax—once again, the biggest, the best, the brightest ever. Well, I am here to say that, even for a government that bases everything it does on spin, this much spin can make you giddy. Here is a so-called tax cut that actually raises even more money from the people the government claims are getting relief.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker: it is customary to hear the Treasurer in silence, and the house normally extends the courtesy to the Leader of the Opposition, too.

*Members interjecting:*

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** In fairness to the member for West Torrens, he even interjects on his own speakers.

*Members interjecting:*

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** He is totally unruly and just does not know how to keep quiet. But back to land tax, sir. Here is a so-called tax cut that actually raises even more money from the people the government claims are getting relief. There is a massive increase of more than 30 per cent in land tax revenue this year. That is hardly what even the member for West Torrens could call a cut. On top of that, the government is expecting another \$30 million extra next year. The government should be ashamed of itself for bragging about a cut that generates far more revenue. That is not a cut; that is a sham. This budget is further proof that this government is not in control. A good look at it confirms that ministers are failing miserably to control their departments. To cover it up and hide this mismanagement, the government is using the



strength of the Australian economy by deliberately underestimating revenue.

In 2002-03, it underestimated revenue by \$528 million. In 2003-04, it underestimated revenue by \$794 million. In 2004-05, it underestimated revenue by \$461 million. That is almost \$1.8 million, or an average of \$600 million a year. That is extra revenue above what was in the budget. Where has it gone? It has been wasted. It has not gone into investment and infrastructure. It has not gone into better services for South Australia's future. Most of it has been wasted. There are a few examples that are easy to find: Sturt Street School—a budget blow-out from \$2 million to \$7 million—just a lazy 250 per cent; ministerial staff—increased costs of \$16 million over four years; two new ministers to shore up the government at \$2 million each year—that is another \$16 million over four years; the Dr Margaret Tobin Health Unit at Flinders Medical Centre—a budget blow-out from \$10 million to \$17 million; and nearly 400 more public servants are earning more than \$100 000 a year. They are the people that the Premier and Treasurer call 'fat cats'. They promised to cut them by 50, but they have increased them by 400.

One startling figure in the budget highlights the lack of control that ministers have over their departments. It is scandalous, but financed by the Treasurer's under-estimations of revenue raising. This underestimation is averaging \$600 million a year. So, again, that is \$600 million on top of the budgeted revenue. What has also been un-budgeted is the growth within the public service. The government budgeted to have 67 626 public servants as at 30 June 2005, but the utter inability of ministers to control their budgets means that that figure has risen to 69 468—a blow-out of 1 842 over their own budget figure. There are 1 842 additional public servants more than it said it would have.

Of course, we need extra police, teachers, nurses and strategic placements to deliver services, but these are not police, teachers or nurses. Who is keeping an eye on this? Is anyone? There are 1 842 extra public servants at a massive and scandalous cost. It is blatant mismanagement, and it is financed by the dishonest underestimation of revenue, particularly property taxes. It is a slush fund to cover incompetence. There are 1 842 public servants that, largely, the government did not know it had. It rivals the *Yes, Minister* episode of the empty hospital. These are more of the public servants and more of the people the Premier and the Treasurer like to call fat cats. This is after the Treasurer told the media that he was looking forward to tapping a few of them on the shoulder and getting rid of them. He is not tapping them on the shoulder, he is patting them on the head.

We have a great public service. Our public servants in South Australia do a terrific job. The government does not value them. Our public service needs leadership. It needs political leadership that actually values it, knows what it is doing, has a grip on how many public servants there are, and strategically delivers services, not just numbers. In 2004-05, the government underestimated its revenue by \$461 million. That is, the government received \$461 million more than it budgeted for. That money should have been invested in infrastructure or services for South Australia. Unfortunately, there was no sign of that—none. The budget papers show the extra public servants, most of whom no-one in cabinet knew about, cost the state \$140 million this year. That is almost enough to fix the country roads maintenance backlog. It is a \$184 million tribute to waste. It is a figure that goes past

\$200 million when you add on the extra ministers and ministerial staff.

Underestimating revenue and then spending the extra dollars inefficiently would be an economic scandal at any time, but hiding it and then wasting it is absolutely inexcusable. I would have thought that the Treasurer might have used this budget to address a couple of the Premier's broken election promises. The pledge cards said, 'We will fix our electricity system, and an interconnector to New South Wales will be built to bring in cheaper power.' That is what it says on the Premier's pledge card. I took the Premier's advice and kept one of his pledge cards to see if he kept his promises. It is very obvious that he did not keep that one.

The Rann Government bungled South Australia's entrance into the National Electricity Market, and because of that South Australians are paying substantially more than they should be for electricity. And the Treasurer knows that, because in this budget he tried to buy off the electorate with a one-off cash grant of \$150 that one group of South Australians is going to receive. Pensioners and self-funded retirees are going to get that \$150 bribe. What about the rest of the state, Mr Deputy Speaker? Everyone has had to put their hand in their pockets to pay for higher power charges, but only 255 000 people get the bribe. The rest of South Australia is hurting too. They are paying the price for Labor's inability to manage South Australia's entry into the National Electricity Market.

I cannot believe the gall of the Treasurer. When the power companies came to the Rann government and asked for a 23.7 per cent price hike just after the election, the energy minister said, 'Sure.' I am surprised that he did not ask them if they wanted a bit more, because I am told that after he let the power companies get away with a big increase his colleagues were telling people that they could wear a rise in the first year because everyone would blame the Liberals for it. Now, three years later, as we approach the election, the Premier and the Treasurer think that they can buy the community off by pulling a \$150 rabbit out of a hat. Is anyone surprised that when the power companies came to the government and asked for another big price rise recently they were given a firm 'No'?

This government is so consumed with itself that it has the Premier out there on television telling people how wonderful he and his government are: taxpayer funded ads with a Premier spruiking his government and the budget. This is from the Premier who told this house in June 2001:

We all know when we see a politician on a taxpayer funded ad, it is just a cheap way of doing the party ads.

Talk about an about-face. This government has turned taxpayer-funded party advertising into an art form. More and more of their pictures are starting to appear on departmental advertising in the paper, and the Premier had his picture on a letter with land tax rebate cheques. The Premier and the Treasurer milked South Australian property owners all they could during the property boom. Last year more than one tenth of their total revenue came from property tax. Now, when they hand a tiny little bit back—a very little bit—the Premier wants his picture on the cheque. I wonder if he will put his picture on the land tax bills when they go out later this year? Here is my prediction: he won't. The Premier does not like being associated with bad news. He is more of a good time guy. He is right behind the health minister, though—about 20 kilometres behind her. He is not anywhere near the shambles that the Labor government has turned health into.

I do not think South Australians will let the Premier forget the fourth item on his pledge card. It said, 'Better hospitals and more beds.' It is a handy little document because it helps us remember what the Premier promised when he was opposition leader—better hospitals and more beds. I would have thought a Treasurer with access to \$10.7 billion might have gone at least part of the way to helping the Premier honour that pledge. But, no, all the Treasurer can find for our struggling health system is 1.7 per cent more than last year. The Treasurer's own papers forecast an inflation rate of 2.75 per cent for 2005-06, so this budget does not increase spending in the health system at all. In real terms it actually cuts spending.

How can a Treasurer with access to all this money have the nerve to impose a real term cut in health spending when hospital waiting lists are at an all time high? People are waiting three and four years for appointments to see orthopaedic surgeons, and then have another long wait to actually get on the operating table. We have heard the minister tell us about cutting waiting lists but conveniently ignoring the three years that people are waiting to see the specialist to get listed. People have been prepared for surgery and then sent home because beds are not available for them when they come out of the theatre. Health professionals are deserting the system.

The tragedy of this is that the health minister is not even aware of these issues when the opposition raises them in the house. She is asleep at the wheel while the Premier and the Treasurer are cutting real term spending in health. What kind of minister is she? In mid April she said that the health system was stuffed. If it is stuffed, it is stuffed because she stuffed it. This is a health minister who said in May that she wanted to hand the job over to Canberra. She ran up the white flag. 'It's stuffed,' she told the federal minister, Tony Abbott. 'Here, you take it.' If it was not so serious, it would be a joke.

Let us have another look at the pledge card, 'Better schools and more teachers'. If our schools are better now than they were in 2002, why is it that parents are pulling their children out of the public system in droves? There are now 6000 fewer children in public schools than there were in 2002 when this government came to office, and there is a corresponding increase in the number of children in private schools. Why would 6 000 families pay thousands of dollars—sometimes tens of thousands of dollars—to put their children into private schools if the public system had been improved in line with the Premier's election promise? This budget shows that \$47 million will be spent on capital works projects throughout our school system over the next 12 months. That sounds okay until you realise that in 2002 the capital works budget was \$94 million—double what they are putting in this year. This government has halved capital spending in our schools in just three years; so much for better schools.

Let us have a look at the justice system and how the budget treats it. I will tell you how this budget treats the justice system: it is the same way the Premier treats the legal officers of this state—with contempt. The Premier talks about being tough on law and order but the rhetoric does not match the reality. This government is starving the justice system to the point that the head of the parole board says she does not have the funds to run the parole system properly. Where are the 200 extra police the government keeps talking about? There is another broken promise. For the entire term of this government we have been hearing the police minister talk about the 200 extra police. He began by telling South Australians that there were more police on the force than at any time in the state's history. That was true at the time

because the Police Force was reaping the benefits of recruiting programs which the member for Mawson had led the way in the previous government in putting into place. The trouble with this government is that it has tried to save money by recruiting to attrition—simply replacing those police officers that left the service.

This government is now in its fourth year in office, and its more police promise has gone the same way as the promises of better hospitals and more beds, better schools and more teachers, and cheaper power. They have gone straight out of the window. Could there be a sinister plot developing here? Could it be that the Rann government is under-funding the justice system because it has not got anywhere to put the prisoners? Remember, this government abandoned the new women's prison project and has done nothing in terms of accommodating all these criminals that its 'tough on crime' stance is supposedly unearthing. The Department for Correctional Services is planning for a 1 per cent increase in prisoner numbers again this year.

This government does not attack criminals: it attacks lawyers, the justice system, the Parole Board and the DPP's office. Today the Deputy Premier made what I believe was an unprecedented attack on a senior independent officer of this state. To use the parliament to personally attack Stephen Pallaras, our new DPP, really takes the position of Deputy Premier to a new low. The attack was nothing more than a huge dummy spit by the Deputy Premier. Basically, the message was intimidatory. The Deputy Premier came in here today to try to intimidate our DPP into never criticising this government again. He said, 'I will show him what we'll do to you.' It was absolute intimidation—about five pages of attack on an individual, planned and printed out upstairs.

**An honourable member:** Typical Foley thuggery.

**The Hon. R.G. KERIN:** It was thuggery; it was a dummy spit of the biggest order. It showed a government that cannot take any criticism whatsoever. After a huge search around Australia and the world to find Elliot Ness we actually have someone who has come here, shown some backbone and told the government what is wrong with that office. What is wrong with a DPP pointing out to the government the shortcomings that are making it hard to deliver justice in this state? There is nothing wrong with that, but the Deputy Premier did not like it. It is like what happened to Frances Nelson, and it is what has happened with lawyers who have had the temerity to criticise this government. One of them got called 'a mullet head' by the Premier. To what level do these people want to take the office of Premier and Deputy Premier by intimidation and abuse, just because the government cannot stand any criticism?

I am still amazed by the decision of this government, which is supposed to be tough on crime, to axe the community crime prevention programs introduced by the former Liberal government. Today we saw the Attorney-General, in one of his more bizarre efforts, almost laughing about community crime prevention and talking about environmental design and how that is stopping crime. Ever since the day he decided that he wanted more lawyers rather than community crime prevention, things have gone backwards with law and order in this state, and they should be put back in place. The police, the prosecutors, the magistrates and the judges will all tell you that those community crime prevention programs were working, yet the Rann government consigned them to the bin and the Attorney came in here and told us the money was better spent on lawyers. Yet, listen to what he now says about lawyers. With crime statistics still

rising, our police under-resourced and our prosecution and parole systems nobbled and under criticism from the government, no-one should be surprised that the justice system in this state is under pressure.

Let us look at infrastructure spending. This budget provides for \$2.9 billion in capital works over the next four years. On the surface that sounds like a reasonable amount of money but, with only a slightly larger revenue base, the Western Australian government—which is not heading towards an election, either—last week announced an infrastructure program of \$15.8 billion over the same four-year period. That is right—six times the amount that the Rann government will spend over the same period of time. That is an absolute lack of investment in this state's future.

The New South Wales government will spend \$35 billion over the next four years—contrast that with our \$2.9 billion. I would have thought that with \$10.7 billion at their disposal, the Treasurer and the Premier might have come up with something more imaginative than a \$2.9 billion infrastructure program featuring a 2.4 kilometre extension of the Glenelg tramline and a couple of tunnels on South Road.

The sum of \$50 million goes on shifting the Glenelg tram terminus from Victoria Square to North Adelaide. That announcement has already been described as policy on the run. What was it all about? Six weeks earlier the government unveiled its infrastructure plan. Some plan—there was nothing in it about the tramline extension into North Adelaide. The infrastructure plan was a six-week wonder. Not only has the tramline been changed since, but also the pipeline on Eyre Peninsula has all of a sudden appeared out of nowhere. It will be out of the Murray, but it appeared out of nowhere. How could the government spend three years preparing an infrastructure plan and then, within six weeks of releasing it, make two major announcements that are totally inconsistent with what is actually in the plan? I would hazard a guess that the transport minister was as surprised as anyone else when the Premier, during his overseas travels, pulled out of his hat the one about the extension of the tram line. If it fitted where he was at the time, it was good for that press conference, and now they are going to have to work it out.

Then again, the minister is so out of touch with his portfolio that when we asked him last week to give us a time line for his plans to double public transport use he could not give us an answer. I suspect he was not aware that within the strategic plan targets there actually is a target to double the use of public transport by the year 2018. Yet again, that is not taken into account when you look at the impact of a tram between Victoria Square and North Terrace. The government is saying that the number of buses will decrease by 20 per cent and that that is why a tram will work. However, if the number of people using public transport is going to double in number obviously the number of buses has to increase, not decrease. It is well past the time for the transport minister and the rest of his cabinet colleagues.

We are also to get road tunnels on South Road where it crosses Port Road and the Anzac Highway. There goes another \$120 million, with critics saying that all the tunnels will do is get vehicles from one South Road traffic jam to another a bit quicker. South Road needs more than a couple of tunnels at a cost of \$120 million. It needs an integrated solution on the north-south corridor and not just a couple of headline fixes—as indeed does the entire Adelaide road network, including South Australia's regional roads. Yet this budget contains almost nothing for those. We recently came

back from the South-East, and we know of the major problems being experienced there, yet this government totally ignores them, and that has huge ramifications for the area. It is not just about economic development: it is about the tourism industry and amenity, and it is very much about the safety of those forced to use and to share the outdated roads, with the enormous lift in heavy transport.

The Premier and the transport minister are pious about road safety, and they introduce legislation to double demerit points, but they do not do anything about the state of our roads and pay only lip service to calls for road safety awareness campaigns. I will give an example of spin doctors and the government's getting out of check occasionally. Last week, when the Minister for Transport made a pre-budget announcement, he mentioned that, over the next four years, \$1.5 million would be allocated to saturate country roads with police to monitor speeding—and 'saturate' was the word used in both the ministerial statement and the press statement. For those who understand police shiftwork, \$1.5 million over four years equates to only one more policeman in a car for those four years in regional South Australia. Saturation point! If that is saturation point, it says a hell of a lot about the priority that this government places on regional South Australia and on road safety. It also says something about its arithmetic. One more backside in a police car just shows how ridiculous the spin doctors can be.

The government's focus is always on increasing the penalties instead of attacking the problem. Why will it not attack the problem? Because increasing the penalties does not cost anything; in fact, it raises revenue. Improving our roads or launching a serious road safety campaign cannot be done for nothing. However, simply increasing the penalties does not cost anything and creates the illusion that the government is doing something.

At the outset, I described the budget as a missed opportunity and as a sad and sorry document. One of the saddest things about it is that, once again, it forecasts employment growth below the national average. Over the next year, the Treasurer expects employment to rise by 1.25 per cent, compared to 1.75 per cent nationally. That is unfortunate for South Australia, because this government's term of office has really been marked by its failure to help South Australia share in the national economic boom to the same extent as the other states. True, there has been job creation here; in an expanding economy, you would not expect anything less. Every other state has also seen growth, but South Australia has not gone ahead at the same pace as the rest of the nation, and budgets such as this are part of the reason.

It is hard to believe that, after three years of a rise in revenue, this government has not been able to deliver a better result for the people of South Australia. It should not go unobserved that, in this budget, the Premier and the Treasurer have taken financial manipulation to a new level. They used to spread things out over four years, with big announcements, hardly anything in the early years and all the money down the track—after the next election. However, this year, they went one step further: they started spreading it out over seven years. It is a sad state of affairs when you have to bulk things up over seven years to make them sound good—but that is what this government is all about: looking and sounding good. It is not about substance, and it is certainly not about creating a visionary future for South Australia.

Quite frankly, I think that a challenge for the Economic Development Board in South Australia is to have a damn good look at this budget. In its report, when the Economic

Development Board talked about the strategic plan, it stated that the budgets of this state must be tied to attaining the targets set as part of the State Strategic Plan process. It was absolutely clear about that. However, this budget in no way whatsoever lines up against what is in the strategic plan.

Earlier, we mentioned the target of doubling public transport, but how is that helped by this budget? The government talks all the time about tripling exports, but it ignores the fact that, over three years, exports have dropped by about 20 per cent. How can we say that this budget in any way helps us to triple exports? We will increase exports by increasing regional infrastructure, such as training and housing, but those things are totally missing in the budget. It is a sad indictment of this government. The Economic Development Board should be very disappointed with what has been delivered by the government in its budget, and I would love to hear a comment from the board on whether or not it believes that the budget has delivered on the board's work over the last few years, on the expectations of what the government told the board it would do and on what the board has been saying needs to happen with budgeting in this state.

Over the next few weeks, my colleagues and I will have a very good look at the budget. I look forward to the estimates sessions this year, as they are always an exciting time for members of parliament. However, this year they will be particularly interesting. I had a look over the weekend at the expenditure side of the budget that this government has put forward. I urge members to go to Chapter 2 of Budget Paper 3 and have a look at the expenditures and what was budgeted for each government department for this year.

Also listed there is what has been approved by cabinet over the past 12 months as additional money that has been allocated during the year. If you have a look at those figures, then look at what was budgeted for those departments plus the extras that have been approved, and then look at the government's spending, you will see waste and lots of blowouts across nearly every portfolio which have been caused largely by the fact that ministers have no control over what their departments are doing. It is the old 'fat cat' story again. They have told us they were going to reduce it by 50. Lo and behold, they got a bigger shock than we when the Auditor-General's Report, back in 2003, pointed out that they had actually increased by nearly 300 at that stage, rather than decrease by 50. The same thing has happened again. Ministers are not across their portfolio areas. They have no control of spending within their portfolio areas.

In that Chapter 2 of Budget Paper 3, alarm bells ring everywhere when you look at the budgeted number of public servants for the year versus what is there now. This is a government that has been using the extra windfall revenue which has been coming in, and for which it has not been budgeting, to cover up for a whole range of sins. Normally when you are in government, particularly when we had the huge debt, if you waste, your budget blows out. This is true if you are looking at a balanced budget. If you spend more than you are supposed to, you are exposed for it.

This government has been underestimating its income by, as I said, an average of \$600 million a year, and much of that \$600 million a year has been used to cover up for the waste that has occurred so that the government can still say that it came in with a reasonable bottom line. That \$600 million a year is money which should have been used to build infrastructure in this state and should have seen us deliver on the promises which were made by the Premier but which he has broken. We have seen enormous waste.

I urge all members, particularly those on the other side who may be worried about their futures, to have a damn good look at Chapter 2—the expenditure part of Budget Paper 3. It makes really interesting reading. I think it is a good commentary on the lack of ministerial responsibility and ministerial knowledge and, basically, it points out the waste that has occurred under this government.

I conclude on that. South Australia should have got a lot more bang for the \$10.7 billion than it has seen. Instead, last Thursday, the people of South Australia got a damp squib.

**Mr O'BRIEN (Napier):** On 29 March 2004—  
*Members interjecting:*

**Mr Koutsantonis:** Where do you live, Dean?

**Mr O'BRIEN:** Yes; just around the corner, just to see him walking—just over one year ago, the Premier released the first fully integrated plan for the future of our state. Entitled the State Strategic Plan for South Australia, the plan draws heavily on the experience of the state of Oregon in the United States. Oregon has pioneered public policy in the area of comprehensive strategic planning that encompasses benchmarks and time lines for state development. By state development, I mean not in the narrow economic sense of addressing traditional economic drivers such as labour relations, productivity or research and development but in more a broad societal or holistic approach that recognises the interrelatedness of economic growth, community wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

In an approach which pre-dates the conclusions of Professor Richard Florida in his book *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 150 of Oregon's best and brightest developed in 1989 a program entitled 'Oregon Shines: an Economic Strategy for the Pacific Century'. The underlying strategy for Oregon Shines is described by its drafters as The Circle of Prosperity where a talented work force, environmental amenities and quality public service create an atmosphere which attracts and grows good jobs and which, in turn, provides opportunities for Oregonians and a tax base that enables the state to maintain its quality public services and facilities and protects environmental amenities. This is much the same approach as Richard Florida has articulated and, in part, it is reflected in our own plan by way of the incorporation of Florida's creativity index and the William M. Mercer quality of life index.

Employing business methodology, the Oregon Shines strategy was then reconfigured as separate societal outcomes called the Oregon Benchmarks with outcomes set for specific years. For the most part (and I will return to this matter when I examine budget structure), the Oregon Benchmarks are based on performance, not effort. I quote from the Oregon Progress Board, as follows:

Rather than monitoring school expenditures to measure how well Oregon students are doing, for instance, Oregon measured student achievement based on standardised tests.

This methodology is the very basis of output outcome budgeting, which I will discuss when I talk on budget structure. South Australia now has its own strategic plan based on six strategic objectives. The first objective is Growing Prosperity—an objective which, at its core, has sustained economic growth resulting in rising living standards.

The second is Improved Wellbeing, which focuses on improving the quality of life for South Australians through improved health and fitness, less crime and a greater sense of personal security. The third is Attaining Sustainability.

Environmental sustainability is the focus of this objective through protection of our biodiversity, securing a sustainable water and energy supply and minimising waste. The outcome will be a South Australia that is internationally renowned for being clean, green and sustainable.

The fourth objective is Fostering Creativity—an objective which has, as its rationale, the role that innovation and creativity have in providing the impetus for South Australia's future growth and expansion. The fifth objective is Building Communities. The benchmarks or key targets sitting within this objective all seek to develop community and civic engagement. The sixth objective is Expanding Opportunity.

The last of the six objectives seeks to ensure that all South Australians benefit from the prosperity and opportunities that will flow from the attainment of the objectives and key targets set out in the South Australian Strategic Plan. All in all, the six objectives of the State Strategic Plan have 79 key targets against which our progress as a state can be gauged and reviewed every two years. The overview to the South Australian Strategic Plan states that, over time, all government plans will align with the State Strategic Plan. The overview states:

All government agencies will be required to base their plans, budgets and programs on the key directions and strategies laid out in the plan. The plan will also provide the framework for agencies to work together to achieve clear overall objectives.

This clear principle (as spelt out in the overview of Volume 1 of South Australia's State Strategic Plan) has been met in the preparation and delivery of the 2005-06 budget.

Budget Paper 1, the Budget Overview, and Budget Paper 3, the Budget Statement, each set out the clear nexus between each of the six objectives between the State Strategic Plan and measures contained within the budget. I will deal briefly with each of the six objectives and the aligning budget measures. The first objective is growing prosperity. Prior to the budget, the government announced the state infrastructure plan for South Australia. The plan is the first major step forward in developing a more coordinated, efficient, sustainable and innovative approach to infrastructure provision and, as such, is a central underpinning to the growing prosperity objective.

Contained in the infrastructure plan were a number of key proposals for improving the state's transport network which have been funded in this budget: \$122 million to construct the South Road tunnel at Port and Grange roads, extending under the Outer Harbor railway line; \$65 million for an underpass at the intersection of South Road and Anzac Highway; \$51 million to extend the Glenelg tram line to the Adelaide Railway Station and north to Brougham Place; \$7 million for a bus and train interchange near the Marion shopping centre; and \$5.7 million for a significant upgrade of transport facilities on Eyre Peninsula. All will contribute significantly to the way in which freight can be moved around our state for export and the ease with which South Australians travel by private and public transport—a factor in the Mercer's quality of life index.

The second objective is improving wellbeing. The budget provides immediate support for health services and gives significant funding to reduce our road toll: \$2.71 billion will be directed to support the delivery of health services over the next financial year and over the next four years; \$201 million will be spent on new health initiatives which include the following: \$22 million for transitional care for the aged, enabling a further 86 places to be created; \$20.8 million for mental health to provide additional resources for community

support and home treatment; \$3.8 million for the Oakden mental health facility; and \$1.4 million to support the delivery of vaccination programs in schools.

The South Australian Strategic Plan targets a 40 per cent reduction in road fatalities by 2010. A major road safety program targeting speeding and traffic light offences is included in the budget at a cost of \$35.6 million over four years. Other road safety initiatives over the four years include: \$4.3 million to implement a package of measures to reduce the incidence of driving under the influence of drugs; \$2.9 million for rail safety upgrades to level crossings; and \$1.4 million to combat speeding on rural highways. The third objective of the State Strategic Plan is attaining sustainability and is addressed in the budget with funding for the sustainable management of our energy needs, our coastlines and the health of the River Murray.

Major new initiatives over the next four years include: \$2.4 million for the River Murray salt interception schemes to reduce salt loads from natural ground water inflow; \$2.7 million to establish the Australian Energy Market Commission; and \$4 million for the long-term management of koala numbers on Kangaroo Island.

The fourth objective is fostering creativity. The budget provides assistance to Carnegie Mellon University to establish a physical presence in Adelaide. Professor Richard Florida (whose works I have cited earlier) is an academic at Carnegie Mellon, and the creative stimulus that a campus of this university will provide to South Australia will assist in propelling the state to our desired ranking in the top three regions in Australia in his creativity index within 10 years.

The sum of \$8 million over four years is also provided to establish the Mawson Institute for Advanced Manufacturing, a joint venture between UniSA and the CSIRO to be located at Mawson Lakes; \$2 million has also been provided to the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra over the next four years; and \$0.7 million is allocated for the Adelaide Fringe Festival to ensure its continuing viability and vibrancy.

In relation to building communities, this budget provides additional funding for police and emergency services in regional areas as part of the government's aim of meeting target 5.10; and \$4.7 million has been allocated to enhance police responses to incidents in regional South Australia by improving the capacity of the additional police aircraft announced in the 2004-05 budget.

Expanding opportunity is the sixth objective of the State Strategic Plan. It is appropriate that it is listed as the final objective because, from a Labor government's perspective, it is of crucial importance that any material, social or environmental improvements that accrue to the state as a result of the State Strategic Plan also flow to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged within our community.

This budget provides significant funding to support services for disadvantaged South Australians. Additional funding includes: \$71.6 million to expand Home and Community Care (HACC) program services to assist frail, older people to live independently and improve their quality of life. It also includes \$20.2 million to expand the Moving On program, which supports school leavers with intellectual disabilities to attend meaningful activities during the day; and \$18.3 million for the provision of home support for people with disabilities, including psychiatric disabilities. At the outset, I pointed to the performance, not effort, focus of the Oregon benchmarks. This performance focus of our own plan is reflected in each of the 79 targets and the measuring tools ranged against them. This brings me to the issue of perform-

ance or output/outcome budgeting. I have discussed how the key elements of the budget have been formulated in a manner to meet the objectives of the State Strategic Plan. I will now discuss the principles behind this type of budget approach.

Over recent years in a number of countries there have been several new approaches to public sector budgeting with a variety of names and definitions. Each approach, whether it be performance budgeting, planned program budgeting, input/out budgeting or zero-based budgeting, is similar in nature and attempt to bring about added efficiencies and better societal outcomes. These various approaches all place greater emphasis on the purposes, results, impacts and effects of expenditure and also contain a critical examination of the relationship between inputs, which are the resources committed, and outputs, the results achieved. Traditionally, government budget documents and the decision-making process associated with them, both at cabinet level and within government organisations, have provided information about the input requirements of a department or statutory authority but far less about the desired results.

Consequently, the justification for additional resources has often been on the basis of new initiatives and sometimes roughly quantified additional workloads or activity levels rather than on the basis of attempting to demonstrate and verify by subsequent monitoring that the commitment of resources to a particular program will result in the attainment of explicitly stated, measurable and practical objectives or outcomes. This budget deviates from the failings of the traditional approach as it places clear emphasis on results. By formulating the budget in a manner that correlates with the objectives of the State Strategic Plan, the budget sets a pathway to help achieve explicitly stated practical outcomes.

The budget has therefore been formulated in a manner that uses solid performance-based budgeting principles and places greater emphasis on results. If we look elsewhere in the world, we can see the significant benefits that have accrued to governments utilising a fully-fledged approach to performance budgeting. Many US states, including Oregon, Texas, California, Louisiana and Minnesota, have benefited from the implementation of performance-based budgeting and output/outcome monitoring measures. The federal US government has also been greatly influenced by the benefits of performance-based budgeting measures. In fact, it has created an Office of Performance Budgeting and Strategic Planning, which serves as the focal point of the US Treasury's budget and performance integration efforts.

John Mercer, an expert in performance-based budgeting, has been a major advocate for this approach and has helped to implement performance-based measures both on a federal and state level within the United States. John Mercer, in his testimony before the US House Subcommittee on Government Efficiency, put forward a workable definition of performance-based budgeting. According to John Mercer, real performance-based budgeting must give a meaningful indication of how the dollars are expected to turn into results. While this indication need not necessarily be done with scientific precision, it should at least show a general chain of cause and effect.

Thus, each program contained in a budget should demonstrate how dollars fund day-to-day activities as these activities in turn generate outputs, and then what outcomes should result. In this respect, a performance-based budgeting system indicates that a goal or set of goals should be achieved at a given level of funding. This type of transparency makes much clearer the efficiency and cost effectiveness of government

programs and, as such an approach, efficiency can be measured as the ratio between inputs and outputs while cost effectiveness can be measured as the ratio between inputs and outcomes. Thus, performance-based measures enable the creation of ratios that demonstrate if expenditure is meeting desired objectives and goals.

A performance-based budget gives a meaningful indication of how dollars are expected to be turned into results. The use of performance-based budgets is beneficial by comparison to the traditional object class budget, as it demonstrates what each dollar will accomplish as well as how each dollar will be spent. Oregon, one of the first US states to implement a state strategic plan, has toughly embraced performance-based budgeting. Oregon has created a targeted benchmark system that allows a practical gauge for results. For instance, Oregon assesses student performance through standardised tests, as I mentioned, rather than by monitoring school expenditures. The implementation of this benchmark system has therefore enabled Oregon to have a practical and accessible gauge, which allows it to easily determine if it is meeting its desired goals on student literacy, for example.

The continued implementation of performance-based measures within South Australia will create many benefits for this state. Performance-based budgeting measures will assist policy formulation and implementation by providing a means of setting explicit program objectives drawn from the State Strategic Plan, establishing priorities for such objectives, assisting alternative means of achieving objectives and reaching informed decisions about the particular programs to be funded within the context of the plan. Performance-based budgeting also emphasises and more clearly identifies accountability at various levels of government by providing information in a more comprehensive format. The emphasis changes from solely one of accounting for it as being spent to include accountability for what is being achieved.

The South Australian State Strategic Plan sets out clear and quantifiable targets, including time lines. Progress towards the attainment of these targets is to be undertaken every two years. This budget has made a considerable contribution towards the attainment of the overall objectives of the State Strategic Plan by placing the plan at the very core of this budget. The budget also embraces the central truth of performance-based budgeting; that budget outcomes are measured not only in financial terms but also, and probably most importantly, in the achievement of outcomes.

For this state these outcomes are broadly summed up by the six broad objectives of the State Strategic Plan, which I have already mentioned: growing prosperity; improving wellbeing; fostering creativity; attaining sustainability; expanding opportunities; and building communities. This budget sets out on the road to achieving each of the 79 targets that sit beneath these objectives.

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Having heard the previous speech (and it was interesting material), I want to raise two or three very quick points. It was the Tonkin Liberal government that introduced program performance budgeting in 1980-81. It was rather interesting to hear the merits of that being sung because, I think, it was the Labor Party in opposition which opposed it, as the Labor Party opposed standardised assessment in schools in South Australia when there was a Liberal government.

The other interesting feature with which I agree with the honourable member is the importance of innovation and

research. In fact, this Labor government scrapped the former centre for innovation and manufacturing which, I think, was one of the most important centres for creating innovation within the manufacturing sector in South Australia over the last 20 years. It was supported by Liberal and Labor until this government, which scrapped it. I find that astounding.

I wish to speak on the health budget and then look at my own electorate and how the budget failed to impact on it. I start with health, though, in looking at the mental health crisis that currently exists within the state. A crisis has been created within mental health over the last 12 to 18 months, and this budget will do nothing to stop that. One of the biggest factors causing the crisis is the lack of recurrent expenditure and the lack of staff. South Australia currently has the lowest per capita funding for mental health of any state in Australia. We have reached that point based on this current year's figures. Under the previous Liberal government we were the third highest in terms of per capita funding for mental health services. They are not my figures: they are figures produced by the mental health coalition, and they are quite damning.

The government has introduced a couple of measures in this budget. It put in \$25 million extra as one-off expenditure just over two years. It then put in \$5 million extra for each of the next four years. That means that there will be an extra \$17.5 million next year and for the year after, dropping back to a \$5 million increase for the two years after that. Even if we put the \$17.5 million now into last year's comparison (in other words, use this coming year's figures for South Australia into last year's figures for the other states of Australia), we find that South Australia still has the lowest per capita funding for mental health of any state in Australia. What an appalling situation to have a budget where the government claims that mental health is the main initiative of that budget, yet still South Australia has the lowest per capita funding of any state in Australia.

*Mr Meier interjecting:*

**The Hon. DEAN BROWN:** Well, if you look at it, the funding in South Australia is \$117 per capita. Based on last year's figures for the majority of the states and territories, the figure is about \$130 per capita. It shows how far behind the other states and territories we were, even now with this extra funding. Last year we were \$106 per capita compared to about \$130 (average) for the other states and territories. It is an appalling record. This budget will do little—I welcome the small amount extra—to overcome that problem.

To make matters worse, 12 months ago this parliament allocated some money to build capital works mental health facilities. We allocated \$7.6 million for the Margaret Tobin Centre at the Flinders Medical Centre. The government spent only \$1 million of it. We allocated \$7 million to build the aged care mental health unit at the Repatriation General Hospital. The government estimates that it will spend \$1.2 million only on it. That is an appalling record. With respect to the money allocated for two key mental health projects in the last year, the government managed to spend only 15 per cent of the money allocated. So, we slip further behind, and our mental health facilities go further into crisis.

What is needed is a substantial amount of money put into supported residential care and, from what I can see, nothing is done to build those facilities in a substantial way in this year's budget. The last supported residential care facility dedicated to mental health was built at Victor Harbor and was initiated by the previous government.

There is a lack of acute mental health beds within our hospitals. I understand that some of those hospital beds at

Noarlunga are currently shut. They are there as beds, but they are currently shut because of the lack of money and staff. Although on some occasions they open, they open and close. We know that there are enormous queues of people trying to get into acute mental health beds within our hospital system, and just find that they cannot get there.

It is interesting to see that a couple of organisations such as the Australian Medical Association and the Mental Health Coalition were out there arguing that we needed at least \$50 million extra recurrent per year for mental health, and we ended up with \$17.5 million. The most recent *PSA Review* before the budget came out and said that we needed \$100 million per year for mental health, and highlighted how that should be a minimum. And what did we end up with? We ended up with a mere \$17.5 million for two years, then dropping back to a mere \$5 million when we are already at the bottom of all of the states and territories of Australia. This government has taken us there, because we were the third-highest under the former government.

The second matter in health I wish to look at is what is happening with waits for surgery within our major hospitals. Each year, the budget papers set out the performance of the major hospitals over the past year compared with the previous year. It is disturbing to see that, across the majority of the major hospitals in Adelaide—and in the northern area we are talking about hospitals like the Royal Adelaide, the Queen Elizabeth, the Lyell McEwin and Modbury Hospital, and, in the south, Flinders and Noarlunga Hospital—the proportion of urgent surgery being done within acceptable times in the northern area has fallen from 84 per cent of the national standard down to only 81 per cent for urgent surgery. For semi-urgent surgery, it has dropped from 85 per cent of people meeting the national standard to only 76 per cent. That is appalling.

The national standard for urgent surgery states that you should have the operation within 30 days; for semi-urgent, you should have it within 90 days. We are talking about cardiac patients, cancer patients and areas where any delay beyond a reasonable period can become life-threatening. Yet, we find that, here in South Australia, we are falling further and further behind the national standard in terms of meeting those standards for urgent and semi-urgent surgery. At Flinders Medical Centre and the Noarlunga Hospital in the South, there was a slight improvement in the past year, but I highlight the fact that their performance was appalling the year before. It is still only 79 per cent meeting the national standard for urgent surgery and only 70 per cent for meeting the national standard for semi-urgent surgery.

The Rann government can boast of several records when it comes to health. The first is that it has now produced the longest waiting lists and the longest waiting times for surgery ever recorded in the history of South Australia. There are about 11 200 people waiting for surgery. But that is only part of the story. We now find from the government's own figures that there are a further 3 700 people who cannot even get onto the waiting list because they cannot see a specialist at a hospital. You have situations like Modbury where people are having to wait up to 44 months—three years and eight months—to see the specialist to get onto the waiting list. There are 3 700 people waiting for appointments to get onto the waiting list for orthopaedic surgery. Many of those are having to wait two to three years, and some up to more than 3½ years. That is appalling.

If you put those two lists together and look at what has occurred, you have something like at least 15 000 people

waiting for surgery here in South Australia. That does not include those who cannot get onto the waiting lists for things like ear, nose and throat surgery which is equally, I understand, very long indeed. We now have an unacceptable situation in terms of the waits, particularly by older people, or, in many cases, for ear, nose and throat for young people in terms of getting onto the waiting lists. Each of those cases of over 15, 000 represent people who live in a state of anxiety, constant pain and, invariably, the inability to get much sleep each night. As a result of that, they start to lose their independence in their own homes, and then there are higher costs of having to put them into aged care facilities. The situation with elective surgery has gone from bad to worse over the past year.

The third area of health that I want to touch on is that of country hospitals. We have 66 country hospitals. They are the most crucial part of the communities in those country areas. I am delighted to see the member for Chaffey here. I am sure she would acknowledge that the country hospitals are absolutely crucial within her electorate and every other country electorate. The priorities of this Labor government are such that there are no new hospital building programs for country areas at all in this budget. It is the first budget in the 25 years that I have been parliament that I can recall that no money has been allocated to any new country hospital. Except for the one seat of Whyalla, is that because they do not represent country areas and therefore they do not care a damn about country areas? I find it absolutely appalling that country people have been left high and dry when we know there is a need for a new hospital in the Barossa Valley, the centre of our wine industry and Australia's wine industry. We have companies investing literally hundreds of millions of dollars there in terms of new bottling facilities, and so on, and yet, you go to the Angaston Hospital, and it is 1950s, to say the best; you go to the Tanunda Hospital, and it is 1960s, early 1970s. It needs a new hospital.

Housing Trust land was identified by the former Liberal government—and it was all within the one department then, human services. I understand that there is not even a commitment from the present Minister for Health to make sure that that land is secured for a hospital as promised by the previous government. The former government promised to start work in 2005. There is not even money for the design work allocated in this budget. We could go to other areas: Naracoorte, another growing country centre, or Jamestown or Penola or Kingston—all of these places urgently need money spent on their hospitals and they cannot get it. It is interesting because we hear about all this extra money.

The Leader of the Opposition has highlighted \$600 million extra un-budgeted income—revenue to this government in one year—but the budget papers show that this coming year, the Rann government is going to spend \$8 million less on building new hospitals than it spent last year, and \$36 million less than the Liberal government spent in its last budget. That is \$36 million less, four years on into this Rann government. No wonder there is no money to build new country hospitals. All that the government is doing is finishing the work at the existing Murray Bridge Hospital, and one or two aged care facilities, which it delayed for about three years, such as at Kapunda and Kangaroo Island.

It is interesting to compare the recurrent expenditure for country hospitals this coming year compared to what was actually spent last year. The increase in allocation is 2.7 per cent. That will not even cover inflation, let alone the medical inflator which is up around 5 to 6 per cent. So, for the fourth

year in a row, country hospitals are going to have to cut services as they have done for the last three years, simply to balance their budgets. We know what happened in the Riverland. We have the memo put out by the general manager of the Riverland area about what happened in their area last year, and we know that that reflects right across the state.

We have a health minister who has said that the public hospital system is 'stuffed'. A week or so later she then said she wanted to hand over the responsibility for the hospitals to the federal government. Here is a minister who has lost the desire to get in and fix the problems, a minister who does not have the capability to get in and fix the problems and, as a result of that, she wants to hand the problems on to the federal government in Canberra. What an appalling situation.

I turn to my own electorate. In my own electorate I want to firstly pick up the point that there was an announcement on Kangaroo Island about three weeks ago that the Rann government was going to put \$400 000 a year into improving maintenance of the roads on Kangaroo Island as part of their strategic plan. What these budget papers show is the worst piece of deceit that I have seen from a government in terms of a local community. They indicate that the government is going to increase the port charges to raise the \$400 000. So, they are going to tax the people on Kangaroo Island on their one means of getting across with their car on a boat through Cape Jervis and into Penneshaw port. The government is going to increase the charges there which will increase the cost of all items on Kangaroo Island and make the people of Kangaroo Island pay for the \$400 000 a year extra, an appalling thing. That is shown on the Regional Statement with the note at the bottom of the table: 'Expenditure met through increased port charges.'

So, it is the people of Kangaroo Island who are going to have to pay for the so-called largesse of this Rann government in spending a little bit more money. I highlight the fact that the previous Liberal government gave a commitment for a ten-year period to spend \$5 million a year on roads: on sealing the South Coast Road, the West End Highway, the road to Seal Bay, the road to Cape de Couedic, on upgrading the Playford Highway, on putting in passing lanes to Cape Jervis, and on introducing a freight subsidy to Kangaroo Island. On top of that money, we also gave them the \$10 million infrastructure grant, all over a ten-year period. What has this government done? It has offered them a mere \$400 000 and told them that they have to pay for it through increased taxation. So much for a strategic plan talked about by the previous member. So much for all the huff and puff that we hear from this government.

I find that there is money for the Victor Harbor High School—a four-year delay and no new campus. There is no money for the new Victor Harbor TAFE facility, which has now been delayed at least four years, even though the previous Labor minister for education said that both of those facilities would be delayed by no more than one year. But we find that there is no commitment for a TAFE college and that the Victor Harbor High School has been delayed for four years. In terms of roads and passing lanes, we find that there is \$3 million extra to extend one passing lane on the Victor Harbor Road. Where is the commitment to a dual highway through to Victor Harbor? That is the sort of thing that you would find in Western Australia or Queensland—no commitment at all, even over the next ten years. This government's strategic planning and its budget policy has failed and let down the people of my electorate miserably.



**Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg):** I rise tonight to respond to the 2005-06 state budget, and I particularly will address issues in relation to education, employment and training, and population. On 26 May 2005, after the South Australian state budget was issued, Mr Andrew Goal, the President of the Australian Education Union said:

I think that this government is being particularly tight-fisted when it comes to public education.

That is a damning indictment, but an accurate statement, in relation to this government's commitment to education in this state. Let me remind the house of what the Australian Labor Party pre-election policy recorded in relation to education, as follows:

Labor is committed to improving children's services and the standards of education in our public schools and TAFE institutes.

The first minister for education and children's services in this government said, on 8 August 2002, that:

The new government's strong commitment is to rebuilding the public education system.

And, again, in relation to Labor's plan for better schools in 2002:

Education is the most important investment any community can make for its future.

Well, the position is this: the 'education premier' (as he so proudly paraded himself at the commencement of this government's reign) has fallen hideously short in relation to that commitment to the education community and the children of South Australia.

This government has introduced a number of changes, and I will give a brief summary of what they are. First, they changed teacher placement in schools—now the schools fill out the forms and the department makes the choice. Then they changed the asset management regime, which went from schools making a choice as to what they thought were priorities for their school to an imposition by the department—in particular, in line with occupational health and safety requirements—that they would determine what schools would do. Then we had the change in the school fee arrangements, first on School Card and its linking with Centrelink—which, in itself, was probably a good idea but which was imposed so hastily that we ended up in chaos in 2002-03. Now, after the third adjournment of the debate on school fees by this government until after the next state election, we are left with complete chaos in relation to the administration and application of school fees in the state.

Where are the children in all this? From the government's own documents—although the minister had refused to release the report on absenteeism in the state to this parliament, and notwithstanding the government's imposition of an increase in school leaving age for South Australian children from 15 years to 16 years—this government has failed miserably in relation to absenteeism. Leaving aside years 11 and 12 (an age group the details of which they have refused to publish in the budget), when we look at the published results in relation to absenteeism, one in nine children is not in school every day in this state. When we look at literacy in relation to children in years 3 to 7, whilst the government boasts that it has achieved high literacy examination results, one in 10 children in this state are still below the acceptable reading level or cannot read at all. That is a disgusting position for our children to be in.

But let us return to the finances of this budget. The government, and the Treasurer in particular, was proud to announce that there would be \$35.2 million in extra funding

for education and children's services. That is, of course, over four years—that is in the small type but, clearly, it needs to be put into perspective. Importantly, in response to the strong submissions from the community—in particular, from families of children with disabilities—\$22.1 million of that is to go to children with special needs. As inadequate as that may be overall to the needs of children with disabilities, it is scandalous that this government continues to ignore the children whose parents send them to non-government schools in the area of disability. Some 37 500 students go to the 90 independent schools in this state, and we have a continuing exodus (to which I will refer in a moment) of students out of the public system, but there is also a very high, and increasing, proportion of children who have disabilities in this area. Yet the government refuses to give them support. We need to appreciate that these moneys are there only for children in public institutions. Where is the social inclusion for parents who choose independent schooling for their children? Of course, they are excluded.

Through the Treasurer's budget statement, the government also proudly paraded the fact that there are more dollars per child, so the government claims that it has increased its spending for schools. I want to say two things about this. The first is in relation to that figure of \$9 614 in education dollars per student that is estimated to be spent in the 2005-06 budget. The government says that in the 2001-02 budget it was only \$7 598. Now if, of course, we had a continuing increase in, or even a maintenance of, the number of children in our public school system, then parading that statistic may have had some significance and there may have been some credit to the government. However, enrolments in public schools have dropped 9 697 students from the 2001-02 to the 2005-06 budget year.

That is a census of school students in public schools in August 2001 compared to the number in August 2005. That is nearly 10 000 fewer students in government schools, and one has to ask why this is the case and where they are going. It needs to be recorded that a small portion of those relate to children who are not being born: that is, we have a population decrease in that age group. But the overwhelming majority are children of parents who are electing to change their children from the government system to independent and Catholic schools and, whilst I make no reflection on government and independent schools, I do say that it is an indictment of this government, which owns the government schools and which has total responsibility for the government schools in this state, that we should have this staggering exodus, this abandonment of children out of our government school system.

There is also \$4.2 million, again over four years, for the Learning Together program. The absenteeism issue in this state ought to be a high priority for this government, so there is some funding there, but we are yet to see what they are going to spend it on and whether it will work. We have had three and a half years of this government, and so far it has not worked. The only increase in the numbers of children the government is keeping in school are the 500-odd students who were forced to stay at school and who would otherwise not be at school if it were not for the raising of the age. It ought to be a much higher priority of this government to get those children back into school. Leaving aside the figures concealed relating to year 11 and 12 students in the state, one in nine students is not at school every day, and that ought to be addressed by the government.

An extra \$1.2 million has been allocated to expand the Premier's Reading Challenge. Well over \$2 million has already been spent on this project and, whilst it is important to encourage children to read (and the Premier can play an important leadership role), I ask: what is all this money being spent on? I can tell you—a publicity campaign for the Premier. At the end of the program, the children of South Australia will be able to read the words 'Mike Rann' but will probably not be able to read their own name. That is the reality. We should never forget that over \$7 million has been spent reopening the Sturt Street Primary School (initially for 19 children, but it now has 65 enrolments), yet thousands of children remain in substandard accommodation in our government schools across the state.

I highlight the fact that, in the 2001-02 financial year, when this government came to office, \$97.4 million was allocated to capital works for the rebuilding and redevelopment of our schools across the state. This year, that figure has been slashed to \$47.6 million, almost all of which is to continue existing works. Only a few hundred thousand dollars is being spent on proposed new works—for example, to move the Aldgate kindergarten to its new site and to do work on the Bellevue Heights Primary School. I remind the house that, last year (as disclosed in the annual report of the Department of Education and Children's Services), \$12.4 million was not spent out of the capital works program. This year, that funding has been slashed. I think that it is most disturbing that we have an acknowledged maintenance backlog in our schools of between \$250 million and \$300 million, yet the annual allocation for capital works in this state has been slashed to less than half. It is an absolute disgrace.

During the time of this government, the work force in the ministerial office and the fat cats who work in the department continue to increase in number, yet we have a stagnant full-time equivalent work force. As I have said, student enrolments are plummeting, and that ought to have the immediate attention of this government. That is the situation of our education and children's services sector.

In relation to the minister's announcement of eight pilot childcare and early learning facilities, I say this: as much as there is a demand for childcare services in this state, it is a commonwealth responsibility. For the government to allocate funding to take over responsibility for this area, and not bring the commonwealth to account for it, is in breach of the South Australian and commonwealth agreement, and those funds ought to be applied to the education of children.

It is an even sadder story in relation to higher education. Here is the Labor Party story so far: it got into government, it had a police inquiry into the TAFE administration and it appointed, and then sacked, its first CEO. We are pleased that Mr Brian Cunningham has been on deck since earlier this year, and we hope he does well. However, in the lifetime of this government, TAFE fees have increased by 50 per cent, and those students do not have access to the higher education contribution scheme; they have to pay as they go. TAFE has been restructured, and it is alarming that 8 700 children under the age of 18 years are in TAFE colleges across this state, yet the government has done nothing to implement a child protection regime and reforms for those children. What has the government done? It has announced that it will spend \$6 million on the department's relocation to and planned tenancy in the City Central development. It will absorb nearly \$5 million in extra salary costs, and there will be an overall budget increase in its revenue—largely from fees paid by the students and the projected gain from the sale of assets.

What is the government doing with this money? Of course, the Premier announced that he will give \$20 million to the Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania, which already has a presence in South Australia at one of the TAFE outlets. Nothing has been allocated for public universities. One of the disappointing aspects in relation to the Carnegie Mellon incentive to come to South Australia is that the university will provide courses which are already available in this state and for which the Australian National University in Canberra has a higher world rating than Carnegie Mellon. Where is the Premier on this issue, other than to grandstand in his bringing it to South Australia? We welcome the university, but it does not need a \$20 million price tag. If the Premier had said to the Treasurer that he would rather spend the money on sorting out school fees and the materials and services charge in the state, it would probably have paid for the entire cost of those fees and charges, and we would not need to have them at all. That action would have been far better for the public education of our children in this state.

The Veterinary Applied Sciences Centre at Gilles Plains TAFE receives \$13.1 million. Well, good luck! Last year \$3 million was slashed because the project was delayed in construction. At least it is still on the books, but we need to be clear about what is slipping through in relation to such projects.

In higher education, the government really needs to address the declining rate of increase in the number of apprenticeships in South Australia. It needs to have the state minister sign the commonwealth and state training fund agreement to ensure that South Australia gets its fair share. It needs to give priority to the areas of skills shortage which are already known to this state, and it also needs to have some respect for the industry and the opportunities for apprenticeships, as well as for the registered training organisations and give them the same level of energy and recognition that is given to the public system in relation to TAFE colleges. I think it is disappointing to note that in the 2004-05 budget there were some reductions in student enrolment hours. In particular, the student hours at TAFE colleges saw a shortfall of 1.23 million hours, which ought to be sending alarm bells to this government.

In relation to the labour market trends, let me place this on the record. Our South Australian employment trend grew by 2.9 per cent in the last year. This has been identified and recorded from April 2004 to April 2005. Our unemployment trend was down 1.1 per cent in the same period. It is disturbing that the government seems to be trapped in the last century on this issue. It ought to be dealing with the question of employment more so than unemployment because, as Australia moves ahead, we need to take our share. If we were anywhere near the Australian position in relation to jobs growth, we should have 52 000 more jobs in this state, not 40 000 new jobs. We need to have a government which is aware of that and which understands the implementation of it.

In relation to population, there are some disturbing aspects. We do not have a hope in hell of reaching the 2 million residents in this state by 2050 unless this government gets its act together. If it were not for overseas migration, and still just the population growth by birth, it would expose the staggering statistic that last year some 3 067 South Australians moved interstate. These are people who decided that it was better to live in Queensland, Western Australia or Tasmania, all of which states are population positives. That is another matter that the Premier needs to address. As we

know, in estimates he always answers the questions instead of the minister responsible for population matters, namely, the Deputy Premier, and it is time he addressed this issue. Time is running out and we need to be able to turn that around so that we do not have this exodus of South Australians leaving this state.

I conclude by saying two things in relation to the state electorate of Bragg which I proudly represent. Firstly, after decades, we have the funding approved at least to start the plans for the Linden Park Primary School and the Linden Park Junior Primary School. I am pleased to see that and for it to be recognised in this budget. In the three years that I have been the member representing the people of Bragg, I have fought to keep the Centre for Performing Arts at the Marryatville High School on the agenda. I have also fought to try to address the issue of the Britannia Roundabout, which is still a problem. Funding still continues in this budget for the project but, sadly, there is not one scintilla of evidence out there to indicate that that program is advancing at all, but we live in hope.

Another matter is the government's announcement to sell the Glenside site of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. For as long as there is breath in me I will fight the sale of that site to keep services in relation to mental health in South Australia at that site for the people of Bragg.

**Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson):** I also rise to join my colleagues in highlighting some matters of concern with respect to the budget. There are a couple of positive things in there when I look very deeply, and I will talk about them later. However, overall, when you take the gloss off of this budget and when you consider that this is the fourth budget that this government has delivered, it is a concerning budget for South Australia. I say that because we have actually experienced continued growth to this point in time since 1997.

In fact, at the 1997 election, if you have a look at the economic situation as far as growth went, and if you look at the improvement in job numbers, the reduction in debt and, therefore, the difference with interest on the percentage of interest on gross state product in 1997 compared to where it was when we came to office in 1993 with the massive State Bank Labor debt, you can see that growth was occurring at that time. That continued to grow and accelerate, and it particularly accelerated from 1999 to 2000 and it has continued, as I say, until now. However, I am particularly worried about the future—both the mid-term and long-term future. It may be that this government can get away with some sort of stabilised growth or small ongoing growth until about the next election. But I can tell the community of South Australia that the trend indicators are extremely concerning for the mid-term and long-term future of this state.

First of all, you only have to get around your own electorate now and start to talk to businesspeople to see what is involved. They will tell you that certain businesses are still going quite well and that they have been doing so for some time; some of those businesses are going that way because they are in the trade skills area and, of course, we all know that there is an extreme shortage of trade skills labour in this state. It is interesting to note, even within that area, that when you talk to some of the earthmoving contractors, and so on, you see that they are actually starting to find that, for the first time for many years—and, in fact, probably right back through to 1997, as it has been for some in the wine industry, where we had growth even before that—there is a real

flattening of demand for these sorts of businesses. They are one of the ways that you can actually pick up the trend because, if your earthmovers are starting to slow down in the work they are doing, it indicates that a huge amount of businesses will slow down as a result, because that is where a lot of this work starts: in basic earthmoving and site works.

One should also talk to the food retailers in one's electorate: one will find that many of these report that people are actually cutting back on their spending in the supermarkets, as well as on meat and green groceries. Those indicators are always a good litmus test, because they show that, if people are cutting back in that area, then they are really starting to hurt as people least want to cut back on essential foods. They are doing that because this government is the highest taxing government in the history of this state. In this budget, the government has announced tax cuts of \$1.5 billion over eight or nine years. I do not know why it did not say that there would be tax cuts of \$6 billion over 30 years. It is stretching it out so far that half the population will be retired before they see some of these tax cuts. The point is that these tax cuts, by and large, were tax cuts delivered as a result of a commitment of the former state Liberal government and the current federal Liberal government. These tax cuts were signed off: they have to be done.

A couple of them, in fairness to the government (and being the bipartisan member that I am, I always try to acknowledge fairness when I can), it did bring forward some six months as some sort of election incentive. The point is that the absolute majority of these tax cuts had to be delivered as a result of the GST agreement. The GST agreement was an agreement that the Rann Labor Party opposed when it was in opposition. In fact, the two most vocal people, from memory, were the Premier and the Deputy Premier. It is also interesting to note that they were the two who were so negative about the sale of ETSA. Let us not forget why we had to sell ETSA. We had \$10 billion worth of core debt, notwithstanding the fact we also had enormous unfunded liabilities.

It is interesting that, suddenly when the government is offering all these so-called one-off payments, grants and funding opportunities, it says that it is as a result of the AAA credit rating dividend. The fact is that the AAA credit rating dividend was returned to South Australia primarily because of the debt reduction by the former Liberal government, and that is shown in the report. It highlights in particular, first, the sale of ETSA as being a fundamental reason for the AAA rating; and, secondly, the GST dividends. The huge and massive GST dividends make this government awash with money. We have seen continued and successive growth since 1997 to this point, and now we are seeing a flattening of the economy. That is about eight years of continued growth.

If members look at the history of this state, Australia and probably most countries, they will rarely see eight years of consecutive growth. What has happened in the past three years with the forward estimates and capital works investment statement of this budget is that we have missed an absolute window of opportunity to capitalise on the fact that the debt was reduced in 2001. This Labor government has received \$5 000 million, more money than the projected income for forward estimates years, that is, three plus one—four years. Our last budget showed a certain amount of money would be returned to this state in revenue over that four year forward estimates period. This government has received \$5 000 million more than we estimated and that

includes a lot of GST money and property tax receipts as well.

In fact, this is the first year ever that we have seen \$1 billion worth of property taxes. We really have missed an opportunity because we see next to no capital spend in that time, and we all know that this state is screaming out for capital spend, particularly when it comes to infrastructure in the metropolitan, regional and rural areas. In relation to the long-term interests of the economy and the long-term interests of a social dividend to the community, we did not get the infrastructure spend that we should have. I will refer to roads for a start. We have seen a situation where our backlog road maintenance is sitting conservatively between \$160 million and \$200 million, yet if members look at the transport section of budget, they will see that there has been a cut in certain areas.

Members will also see that there has been a blow-out in the Port River Expressway stage 1. They will see no funding for urban road improvements for freight, a funding cut for uncurbed urban and arterial roads, and a funding cut for the state black spot program and the national black spot program. Members will see an underspend and a funding cut for response road safety programs; an underspend for the Mawson Lakes public transport interchange; and an underspend for the Adelaide light rail. Along with that underspend is the blow-out in the budget of the total project cost for the light rail, albeit they are underspending at the moment by \$13 million. There are funding cuts for shoulder sealing programs and overtaking lanes, and no funding for unsealed rural arterial roads. That is a deplorable situation for any government to leave a state in when it has had a window of opportunity and it has failed to deliver.

I am also disappointed to see the budget for the police, one portfolio in which I have a particular interest, as members are aware. This government was forced to deliver the 200 extra police as a result of a very active South Australian Police Association, an active and vocal opposition and a community that was prepared to sign petitions like you would not believe, which we tabled in this house. We discovered that for a period they were not even recruiting at attrition. In fact, that is confirmed even now because, if members look at the current budget situation for SAPOL, it has an underspend in the salaries area. There is only one way in which you can have an underspend in the salaries area for the police department and that is if you do not have enough police. No wonder the community has been screaming out for additional police. Whilst we all support the great work that the police do within their capacity, there simply have not been enough police in this state, and now we can see why.

When these 200 extra police were forced upon this government, it promised to deliver them by the middle of this year, and that did not happen. Then after a lot of questioning by the opposition, the government said 'We've had trouble finding enough satisfactory South Australians to join SAPOL and we don't want to drop our standards.' Of course we do not: we want to keep our police department as the best in Australia. But it is interesting to see the amount of material I continue to receive from people who, on the face of it, at least, appear to be good, honourable citizens who would make excellent police officers but who are still not getting into the Police Academy.

Now we have seen a situation where the government said just a few months ago, 'We're not going to be able to deliver those police by the middle of this year but definitely will have them all there by the end of 2005.' Guess what happened with

this budget: the budget shows now that those extra police will not be here until the middle of next year, 2006.

**Mr Meier:** Is that right?

**Mr BROKENSHIRE:** That is right. They have slipped a whole year in their recruitment. That is in their budget papers, not mine; it is in black and white. It is an indictment on this government and it is disappointing, and it shows again that, when the government talks about being tough on law and order, it simply does not deliver. We see some interesting statistics when it comes to law and order in this state. I find it particularly interesting because, in my own electorate and wherever I go as shadow police minister, people are saying 'Robert, how come the statistics show that crime is down so much, because we do not believe it? We come home at night and find our letterbox trashed, our fence kicked in, and graffiti all over the place.'

They see vandalism, more and more ram raids and outlawed motor cycle gangs out of control. On the weekend we saw stabbings, and a knife, actually, involved in this stabbing in a nightclub. The Premier was the man who was going to fix all this stuff. What the Premier has fixed on law and order is diddly squat. That is what the Premier has fixed. I can appreciate that the member for Mount Gambier gets a bit agitated when I start to talk about Labor's failures in law and order. I cannot help telling the facts to the South Australian community and I will continue to tell them.

We have seen some other shocking home invasions with tragic circumstances this week. Do not tell me and do not tell the South Australian community that crime statistics are down and everything is hunky-dory with this Rann government, and do not tell us either that it is locking up extra prisoners, because I can tell members that there are no more prisoners in the system today than when I was the minister. In fact, the ambitious target of growth for prisoners being incarcerated is 1 per cent next year: 1 per cent of 1 250 (on average) prisoners in the prisons tonight equals very little in the way of being tough on law and order. It is all chest beating, all spin, all rhetoric by the Labor government.

I can tell members that the community is starting to wake up to Mr See Through You Premier Mike Rann. Mr Transparency: a man that you can see through like a piece of Glad Wrap. I want to touch on some other matters of concern and later, when I get a chance for another 10 minutes on this budget, I will be talking specifically about my electorate. The first part of this debate is on my shadow ministerial portfolio responsibilities for the Liberal Party, and then I will have a chance to talk about my electorate, for which I have enormous love and passion. I want to talk for a moment about gambling, which is a major problem in this state; there is no doubt about that.

We have seen again a lot of lip service. We have seen 'I'm the first Premier in Australia to cut poker machine numbers.' Well, whoopee-do. Do you reckon that is helping those families out there tonight battling to put food on the table because one of the family members has a gambling problem? Of course it is not. And we all remember who brought gaming machines into this state in the first place, when the Hon. Frank Blevins was the Treasurer. He wanted to get his hands all over that money and, wow, has he done a favour for the Labor government when it comes to tax revenue from gambling! But at what cost is that on a daily basis to the community?

We are seeing the situation where the revenue from gaming machines in the 2005-06 budget papers is expected to increase for the next two years before any change in this

trend. That is a deplorable situation, when we see that this government is already getting well over \$1 million a day in revenue from gambling. It is a deplorable situation for those families and the government should hang its head in shame and be absolutely disgraced for the lack of support it has shown in real terms for gambling. At this point I want to congratulate the Australian Hotels Association, South Australian branch, because it was not the fault of its members that gaming machines came in. They were given to them by a Labor government, and any business that gets such an opportunity is going to run with it.

I have said all the time that I do not like gaming machines but, if you give someone a business that they can legally operate, of course they are going to get on and make a profit. What they have done is at least be responsible with their efforts, and I commend them for the counsellors they are now putting into clusters of hotels and for the responsible management practices they are putting forward. At least they are showing some real responsibility in this, whereas this government only really pays lip service to problem gamblers.

I want to touch for a moment on the southern suburbs as shadow minister for the southern suburbs. It is a real shame that we have missed out so much over the last three years on the continuing capital works that we were seeing in the south: works like the Southern Expressway; complete rebuilds of schools, like Christies Beach High School; additional building works we were doing when we were in government for Woodcroft Primary School; the planning we did for McLaren Vale Primary School; the work we were doing with McLaren Flat Primary School; and the Willunga High School new stage we did in government. It is a real shame that we have seen almost a stalling, although there are a couple of projects for those schools for which I pay acknowledgment within my electorate.

However, by and large there has not been a real commitment to capital works, other than the School Pride signs, which are supposed to paint the facade of the school before the election so that people rock up to the polling booths and see a nice coat of paint and a shiny sign and think that something is happening in education.

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

**Mr BROKENSHIRE:** It is great to be back in the house finishing my remarks in your presence, sir. Before the dinner break, I was talking about education. A couple of things have continued to occur to the benefit of the electorate of Mawson, and for that I am grateful. However, the seat of Mawson is still in need of many education commitments.

With respect to the southern suburbs, I am bitterly disappointed. We see the Premier announcing \$50 million for a light rail system—called the tram—going from Victoria Square to the Adelaide Hotel, yet in the south we do not have night transport or indeed weekend transport. We do not have an extension of the rail line, and that is very disappointing. This government is so city centric it is not funny—and this at a time when it should be looking at those areas in need of support. I can assure the southern suburbs community that the Liberal Party will do what it did when it was last in government, that is, continue to fight, support and deliver on fundamental projects.

I want to finish on the Aldinga/Sellicks areas. Here we have the government getting lots of money going into Treasury coffers, with the Land Management Corporation selling off lots of land that were purchased at a minuscule

price compared to what they are getting today, yet we see nothing in the way of community health services funding. We see nothing in the way of proactive and preventive health services and no visual infrastructure projects, such as we delivered for Seaford in the form of the ecumenical centre. It is very disappointing that I have to stand here today, having fought for years to ensure that we were not the forgotten south, and see us now becoming the forgotten south.

**Mrs REDMOND (Heysen):** It is my pleasure to contribute to this debate on the anniversary of the entering into this elevated place by the member for Stuart 35 years ago. I am sure that, after 35 years of reading them, he has a better handle on budgets than I have. I still find them enormously difficult things to read, understand and interpret. Nevertheless, I have been doing my best over the weekend with what is in this budget. No doubt, members opposite will be pleased to hear me say that the areas that I shadow have done somewhat better than a number of other areas, although I still do have a few comments to make that are not altogether favourable.

Of course, this government is just about the richest government this state has ever seen. Obviously, it is happy to accept the GST, which it did not want, and it is nevertheless happy to accept the debt reduction due to the ETSA privatisation, which it also did not want. In addition to all that, of course, we have had a huge boon in property valuations and, hence, a windfall from property taxes. I note that, even after the rebates and the relief package offered by the government in relation to land tax, an extra \$31 million is going to the government this year from that alone.

When one combines that with the revenue underestimate, which I think the leader mentioned in his speech and which has averaged about \$600 million each of the last three years, that makes for a government that has a lot of money which it can put to use. I am pleased, as I said, to see that in the areas that I shadow the government has put some of it to use, although it seems that it has done so a little more slowly and at a somewhat lower rate than would have been justified.

One area of remaining concern to me in the area of tax relief is that there has not been any further reduction in either the rate or the threshold in payroll taxes. South Australia already has the lowest threshold at which people become liable to pay payroll tax, at \$504 000. As someone who moves through my community talking to businesspeople, I know that that is a real issue for them. It is seen very much as a tax that is inhibiting business growth when, in fact, this state should be doing everything it can to increase business growth.

In addition to having all this extra money, of course, this government has then had a fairly big spend in a number of areas that are of some puzzlement to me, such as the 1 800 extra full-time equivalent public servants that we see in the books this year. Of course, if they are all teachers, police and nurses that would be fine, but we know that the government has struggled and will not even—I think by the end of this financial year—have on the ground the extra 200 police. I understand that there are even fewer teachers this year than there were last year. I know that the nurses have not increased in any great number, and this suggests to me that, in fact, rather than on the ground out there helping the community type public servants, what we have is an increase in administration personnel. That is what I found in going through the books in relation to the shadow portfolios of housing, disability services, and families and communities.

Of course, we have had an increase in cost as a result of the appointment of the two Independent ministers, each costing about \$2 million a year. So, there is \$4 million a year for the two Independents who have become members of this Labor government; and, in addition to that, other ministerial staff totalling, I think, more than \$16 million over four years.

This government also promised that it would reduce the number of government boards and committees. My recollection is that, at the original Economic Development Summit, the government said that that was one of its aims. However, instead of the number decreasing, we have had an increase in the number of boards and committees. We have gone from 517 boards and committees (at a fee cost of \$9.4 million at the time of the first budget when the government came into power) to 531; so, there are 14 more boards at a fee cost of \$10.1 million as at June 2004. It is a mystery that the government can suggest that it has this idea of reducing when, in fact, the number is increasing, and it is spending more money on them. It is adding things such as the Thinkers in Residence program.

I could cynically say, as I have on a couple of occasions, that I would like to be a thinker in residence. I could think of nothing better than having a little jaunt to some exotic city overseas and sitting and pondering for a while and pontificating about it. That is an expense that I think we could do without. I know that they come up with some ideas, but the cost of running that office seems to be over and above anything that can be justified in our current circumstances.

There was going to be a cut of 50 in the number of fat cats—and that is a term that the Premier uses, not one that I would normally use. He was the one who decided they were called fat cats, and he was going to get rid of 50 of them. And, guess what? Instead of a cut of 50, we have an increase of 400, or thereabouts. When we finally got the budget in place last Thursday, by the time the evening news came on, there were the first advertisements with the Premier wandering up and down inside the new air terminal—

*Mr Brindal interjecting:*

**Mrs REDMOND:** I could not find any reference to it in the budget, but I note that the response from the Treasurer in question time today was that the advertisements were costing something in the order of \$200 000. That is the very same Treasurer who made that famous statement, 'We know that, when we see a politician in a taxpayer funded ad, it is just a cheap way of doing party political ads.' Of course, the Treasurer has developed this technique, which is common to a lot of the Labor governments around the states of this nation, where they think that doing a mea culpa will absolve them of any responsibility for what they might have said before. They say, 'Oh, I'm terribly sorry. Yes, I made a mistake. Do whatever you will to me. I've done my penance by simply saying that I'm sorry.' In fact, it is such a complete about-face. I can only suggest to the Treasurer that he may be a whited sepulchre—

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** What does that mean?

**Mrs REDMOND:** I would not like to say under—

**Mr Brindal:** It means hypocritical.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley is out of order.

**Mrs REDMOND:** I will refer briefly to my portfolios, first the area of disability services. I was pleased to see that the budget papers state that the priority area for the families and communities budget in 2005-06 is disability services. I have been suggesting to the minister since I became the shadow minister that we will need to put an increasing amount of funding into a range of areas within disability

services for some considerable time to come, because we have in front of us a need for generational change.

I have said before in this place that, until 40 or 50 years ago, people who had children with profound disabilities were encouraged not to take them home, and those children were largely left institutionalised. But, over the last couple of generations of parents, that has been completely reversed, and people are now encouraged, if the child is viable, to take that child home and raise it as part of a family. Whilst being raised in a loving family has a tremendous benefit for the child, it has an equally tremendous impact on the family that chooses to take that child home and raise it. The difficulties that those people face are just enormous, and for the foreseeable future a lot of money will have to be put into that area.

Of course, on the day of the budget announcement, the minister announced that there would be an extra \$92 million (I think it was), and he cited that as the vast amount that they were giving as a funding boost for disability services. But we need to take into account the fact that \$25 million of that \$92 million was money that the government was going to put in this year: that is, sometime in the next 30 days, that money would have been there. That being the case, the question becomes: if the government has \$25 million that it can suddenly spare, why has it not been put into that sector earlier? It is a sector that is always in desperate need. To hold moneys back from the sector when there is money available to meet urgent need seems to make no sense. Of course, when you take out that \$25 million, that leaves \$67 million, which will be applied over the next four years. In reality, what the minister announced last week was not actually \$92 million: it was more like \$17 million for next year.

Regarding the Moving On program, as I understand it, the minister has given an assurance that all the new school leavers at the end of this year will be fully funded for the level of post-school options they require. In other words, all those people whose disability will preclude them from attending work, even in a sheltered workshop, or from going full-time to such work, will have an entitlement to the benefit of that program. Again, I guess it begs the question of the under-funding of those who have already left school. Has that issue already been fully addressed? My feeling is that it probably has not and, until it is fully addressed and until we get ongoing funding, not just CPI increases but increases in the budgeting for this sector each year, it will go on for generations.

In terms of equipment, I note that the minister issued a press release some time ago in which he referred to clearing the waiting list. The press release was on 21 December, and it sounded wonderful. Under the heading 'Disability equipment waiting list to be cleared', the minister talked about a state government input of some \$5.9 million to clear the waiting list for hundreds of pieces of equipment for the disabled. I noticed in the budget papers that, instead of \$5.9 million being expended by the end of this financial year, \$5.4 million will actually be expended, so a cool \$500 000 will not be expended. Also, the reference is to reducing the waiting lists for equipment rather than to the actual expenditure and the clearing of waiting lists. I suppose that might account for why organisations such as the Multiple Sclerosis Society have been in touch to say that only 13 of 90 on its waiting list have received any help at all.

I think I mentioned already that this government likes to make a big splash with its announcements, and it often seems to announce the same thing over and over again. So, it announces funding, then it re-announces whatever it is with

some sort of commencement—maybe a building commencement—then it re-announces it yet again with an official opening, and then when there is a new project to be announced it includes the one it has just completed as part of: this government has committed X billion to this area. The government seems to combine that trick with another one of delaying announcements. It makes a big announcement regarding how much it is going to spend, and it is often over four years or six years, or even more, as I think the member for Mawson said in his contribution, ‘There is no reason why they couldn’t say it’s \$30 million over 26 years,’ or something like that. But it does not get around to starting so that the same multi-million dollar projects stay there, and I think that it is quite deceptive for the public to be given press releases that have this effect of suggesting that the government is doing things, when things are not happening quite as quickly as it would have us believe.

In the area of housing where we have outstanding public rentals of \$10 million and a waiting list of 25 000 people, there seems to be some shortfalls in the budgeting. Under the heading of ‘Public Housing and Private Rental Assistance’ there appears to be an increase of \$20 million from \$41.481 million to \$61.047 million but, in reality, when you read into the detail of the notes, it turns out that that figure of \$61 million and a bit, includes a further \$20.2 million for additional land tax liability. So, the effect is that the amount is going down rather than up once the land tax is taken out.

Again, the other high need housing services described in the budget are partly aimed at reducing demand on acute sector services at Glenside, but the recurrent budget for support services has been reduced from last year’s budget of just over \$3 million to just over \$2.9 million. The affordable housing fund was established this year, and that shows in the budget papers as having had \$30 million expended on it, but that does not mean that the money has been expended for anything on the ground. That means that the money has been placed into a fund, so it is neatly expended because the government has put it into the affordable housing fund but it has not achieved anything on the ground.

I want quickly to touch on the issue of families and communities, which is another case in point where the government makes an announcement, and says that it is going to spend all this money but, in fact, for the whole of the Families and Communities budget for 2004-05, there was \$18 million in the budget but it only managed by the end of this year to spend \$7 million. There is a number of areas which have missed out at this stage. There are some explanations for some of these underspends, but CYFS (Child Youth and Family Services) case management was allocated \$1.1 million in the budget for the current year but only \$161 000 was actually spent. I would have thought that CYFS case management was a particularly important area for us to come to grips with. I hope that it is not just some sort of computer system—and I trust that it is not—but given what Layton had to say and given the fact that the department was then supposed to have a workload analysis done, and that the consultants engaged to do that basically came to the conclusion that the department was so dysfunctional that it could not do what it was originally engaged to do, it seems to me that case management is one of the areas where there needs to be a dramatic improvement.

The government did the right thing and allocated over \$1 million to it for the current year, and then only spent \$161 000. As I said, there is a number of areas where I welcome what the government has done and, in particular, I

welcome its efforts to bring a lot of case workers into the Families and Communities area. I note that it had some flexibility in what qualifications were required, and I think that that was a positive move because it could not obviously acquire the number of social workers it would have needed if a social work degree was required for every single one.

In reading the budget I sometimes think that some bureaucrats just like playing with figures. One that I particularly noticed was the table of ‘Key Performance Indicators for Alternative Care’ in Budget Paper 4, Vol. 3, which talks about an enhanced focus on relative care services consistent with the policy that family-based care is still the placement option of first choice. But, in the current year, less than one in five children placed in alternative care were actually placed with relatives or kin. More concerning to me are the figures for children exiting care who had three or less placements. It seems to me that that is a funny sort of a figure, but that is a figure for children in alternative care who are leaving alternative care. If they are leaving after less than 12 months then the lovely percentage appears—90 per cent had less than three placements. That still means that 10 per cent of them who were in alternative care to their own immediate family for less than 12 months, had more than three placements in that time. It seems to me that that should be changed as a key performance indicator because it is not satisfactory for children who are in this disrupted situation to be in that many care placements.

Time expired.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite):** I think it is appropriate to remind the house that the government today finds itself in an extraordinary fiscal position. It is enjoying abundant revenues as a consequence of buoyant national economic times being enjoyed in every state but, perhaps, more abundantly in every state other than South Australia. The reason for those buoyant national economic times are many, and the reasons for the buoyant fiscal position that the state is in are many. Two of the most important reasons are the GST and the privatisation of our electricity assets. I remind the house that the current Treasurer and the current government opposed the GST deal and the privatisation of our electricity assets, both of which have been found to be the primary cause of the terrific economic circumstances of today.

In 2005-06 the budget papers show that the government will collect \$2.2 billion more revenue than the last Liberal government—a difference between \$10.7 billion and \$8.5 billion respectively. One might ask where that money has gone—and the combined surpluses over the last four budgets, of course, attest to a much greater figure. Where is the dividend for South Australia that should have flowed from those revenues?

Of course, one could argue that the budget numbers cannot really be believed, and I say that because in his three previous budgets the Treasurer’s revenue estimate fell short. In fact, in 2002-03 it was \$528 million; in 2003-04 it was \$794 million; in 2004-05 it was \$461 million. It is almost \$1.8 billion worth of under-estimations—an average of about \$600 million per year. It is a clever trick to underestimate revenues and then find yourself with a windfall at the end of the year which is, of course, available to spend on whatever you may choose but which has not been allocated. I say that it is a little overcautious, bordering on reckless, to have had such substantial underestimates reflected in the budget papers, but I will come back to that point later.

I want to move to taxation, because this is an extraordinary outcome in respect of taxation. I note that there is no payroll tax relief; the South Australian payroll tax threshold in this budget remains at \$504 000—it is one of the lowest of all the states and territories. That has been universally criticised by small business groups, by Business SA and by other peak industry bodies. Business needs that relief, but I wonder if we will get that prior to the election. I would not be surprised if we do, because the Treasurer's fiscal position is so strong that there will, no doubt, be considerable flexibility. But the \$1.5 billion tax relief package announced extends until 2011, with a significant part only kicking in in 2009-10. ABC Radio was saying, 'How long do you want to spread this thing out? It could probably be \$3 billion tax cut over the next 30 years or \$30 billion tax cut over the next 50 years.' It is tricky packaging to present it in the way it has been presented but then, on reading the fine print, one finds that the tax cuts really do not present for many years to come.

Of course, all of this—except the land tax relief, the so-called \$380 million—was forced upon the government by the federal Treasurer, Peter Costello. We read in the papers about the argy-bargy between the states and the commonwealth on that subject, and we note that this government fought valiantly but fruitlessly to resist that pressure. However, in essence those cuts for small business are Liberal Party tax cuts—they would not be there if it were not for the fact that the federal Liberal Party had insisted upon them during negotiations in respect of GST and other payments.

These tax revenues really are quite amazing. When the Liberal government was last in office general government sector taxation revenue was \$2.193 billion, and by 2008-09 the Treasurer expects to reap almost \$3.2 billion. As we stand today it is almost \$3 billion—an extraordinary increase. General government sector total operating revenue is up from \$8.5 billion in 2001-02 when the Liberals were last in office to almost \$10.8 billion. It is absolutely startling. And when one looks at land tax collections, this is where taxation is really biting ordinary families. I say 'ordinary families' because it is actually ordinary families that have an investment property or a second property nowadays—it is a widespread retirement choice for people to make such investments to provide for their retirement. Here you see tax revenues having increased from \$140 million when the Liberals were in office to an estimated \$318 million by 2008-09, and today almost \$300 million. It is extraordinary. Private-sector land tax collections are up from \$76 million in 2001-02 to \$161 million today.

These are startling and quite frightening figures and, of course, they explain how it is that the Treasurer finds himself absolutely awash with cash. Anyone who has run a business knows that if the cash is coming over the counter, things look good. As long as the cash is coming in you can go out there and tell people, 'I am running a great business, I am a terrific business manager. I am running a good show; I am presenting balanced budgets or surpluses', because the cash is rolling in. You can over-staff, you can run things inefficiently, you can be racking up debt, you can have a hundred woes in your business, but as long as your revenues are coming in you look great. The real test of anyone running an enterprise—whether it is a state treasurer or the proprietor of a business—is when the cash starts to dry up, when those abundant revenues, which are, after all, just reefed off people in the form of taxation, suddenly start to diminish. That is when you find out if you are over-staffed or if you are running an efficient business; that is when you find out if you really are a good

manager. It is an absolute mockery for the government to stand up and crow about being a responsible economic manager. It almost makes me chuckle to hear the government saying that it is doing a great job managing the economy. I can do a great job managing the economy, too, if I am awash with cash! Throw hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars at me, throw \$2.2 billion of unexpected revenue at me, and I think a gorilla could stand up and say, 'Look, I am a treasurer and I am running a great show; look at all the money coming in.'

Let us look at the expenses side. There has been an extraordinary increase in spending by this government but, of course, it is all covered up by the revenues. I will come back to that point. Conveyancing stamp duties in 2004-05 collected \$105 million, or 24 per cent more than budgeted for—simply a broken promise. Land tax I have mentioned. Let us look at the unfunded superannuation liability for a moment.

The budget shows us a blow-out from \$3.2 billion, as at 31 June 2001, to \$6.5 billion, which is a frightening figure, and it will be almost \$6.8 billion by 2009. This is the provision for the pensions of public servants, which is unfunded at present. Is there some provision for a future fund? Is there the vision that is coming forth from the federal government? How will we pay these billions of dollars of unfunded liability? It is a problem for tomorrow that is not addressed today in this budget.

As to vision, there is a stark contrast between this budget and that of the federal government, as the federal budget is an example of a government thinking forward, one that identifies problems in the years to come and is prepared to provision for them today. I see very little of that, if any, in this budget. In relation to net lending, surplus numbers, we will call it the SAFA-SAAMC fiddle. Of course, this was the government's clever trick on page 1.5 of budget paper No. 3, namely, that the Liberal government left the budget in a mess. Let me say that \$2.2 billion of unexpected revenue is a mess that a lot of treasurers would love. If I were coming into office and somebody left me such a mess, I would be pretty pleased. Of course, the mess the Labor claim was the so-called 'accrual deficit'. When it tried to argue that it came in and fixed this deficit and that it was the only government to run an accrual surplus, the claim was wrong.

Earlier, we heard comments about the Liberal government's so-called 'fixing' finances by debt reduction and GST deals. The fact is that the last Liberal budget in 2001-02 was in accrual surplus but, after the 2002 election, the Rann government used an accounting trick to turn the budget into a surplus. In an article in the Australian *Financial Review* on 12 July 2002, the former New South Wales auditor-general, Tony Harris, called it a 'fiddle'. He said that the Rann government delayed a planned and budgeted receipt of \$270 million from the South Australian government Financing Authority (SAFA) and the South Australian Asset Management Corporation (SAAMC) from the 2001-02 budget until the 2002-03 budget.

How obvious is it, when you throw this stuff around and the *Financial Review* exposes your little tricks and your game to the world's financial community? The real accrual result from the last Liberal budget in 2001-02 was net lending and borrowing of \$146 million surplus, and a net operating balance of \$96 million surplus. And, of course, it goes on.

As to electricity and the concession rebates that the government has thrown out there as an election sweetener, of course not everybody will receive them. It is small compensa-



tion for the big broken promise by the Rann government that we would get cheaper power prices. We listened to the government say that the wrong thing to do was to sell our power assets. Of course, it did not seem to matter quite so much when Standard and Poor's said that it would give us back the AAA rating, and the main reason was that we got rid of the debt by selling the power assets. It was spelled out in black and white. However, as I read through the government's budget, and as I look through its infrastructure plan, guess what? I do not see anything about the state government's unscrambling the egg. It does not say, 'We do not believe that these assets should be in private hands. We're going to build a new power station,' or, 'We're going to build some power assets. We philosophically believe that (and we have argued it for so long) these things should be in government hands. We're going to turn it around and fix the problem the Liberals left us. We'll invest in power infrastructure.' Guess what? The budget contains no such words.

It is an admission by the Treasurer and the government that the decision was the right decision. They really agree with us, and they are delighted. We made the tough decision and got rid of the debt. They have inherited the budget surplus that flows from it, and they are over the moon and jumping for joy. They would love to give us a big hug and thank us for selling ETSA. It is complete nonsense, and they have not been able to deliver on their promise of reducing power prices. They are in government, and they are now in the real world. They realise that their promise could not be fulfilled, as they had perceived it. We are still waiting for the promise to be fulfilled; it could have been, but it would have cost the Treasurer money.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** How would you have done it?

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** Well, I am not the Treasurer—but you are. The great joy of being the Treasurer is that you have to answer the questions. The Treasurer failed to meet the promise; he had the money to do so, but he chose not to. The fact is that he simply chose to put his money elsewhere, and that is a decision he has to justify to the voters and to the electorate of South Australia.

Of course, there are plenty examples of waste. The budget presented by the government does not reduce flexibility to waste. It is still managing to do it quite successfully. I have talked about the errors in the estimate of revenue collected. They cannot even forecast how much revenue they will collect. It is a pretty incompetent business. I have talked about the collection of GST increasing and, even adjusting for the abolition of state business taxes, we will still be over \$200 million per annum better off in as early as 2007-08. Of course, there is all this fat, and we keep hearing that the government is doing a great job in managing the economy. It does not matter that, in one year alone, there has been a blow-out of 1 800 extra full-time equivalents in the Public Service—an extraordinarily large figure when you consider the entirety of the past four budgets.

Obviously, we support extra police, teachers and nurses, but these 1 800 positions are not all police, teachers and nurses. Government has grown, and this is what you get with Labor governments—big government. If the Treasurer would like to add up the cost of 1 800 public servants, with an average salary of \$50 000 per year, it would come to millions of dollars in one year alone. We knew that the cost of Sturt Street Primary School would be \$2 million, but it became \$7 million. As to ministerial staff, we have bought the members for Chaffey and Mount Gambier, and that has cost millions of dollars.

It is \$16 million over four years if you add it all up. Why does a state like South Australia need 15 ministers? Give me a break. The Housing Trust has outstanding rentals at \$10 million. We have the Port River bridges—curious priorities. We have a backlog of road maintenance but we have money to spend. What is it—\$50 million or \$100 million—in extra costs associated with opening bridges? It happens to be in the Treasurer's electorate. They have the Dr Margaret Tobin Health Unit at the Flinders Medical Centre at a blowout in cost from \$10 million to \$17 million.

As to the senior public servants called fat cats by the Premier, guess what? The increase has been nearly 400, rather than the promised cut of 50 fat cats. We remember the Treasurer and the Premier saying that it was sacrilegious that money was being spent on the EDS building to put tenants in there and here we have \$7 million going into the green building. Government boards and committees were going to be fewer. The arts blowouts—the *Ring Cycle* and the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, for instance—just go on.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** You called for more funding for the ASO.

**Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** The blow-outs seem to have occurred on your watch, Treasurer. Interestingly enough, they seem to have occurred on your watch. One of the great things about being in office is that you have to take responsibility for the blowouts that occur on your watch, and you have to try to prevent them from happening. It has been a disappointing budget in many ways in terms of vision, particularly in the area of infrastructure. The long-term vision is not there. I am sure we will get a dream sheet from the government—an unfunded dream sheet—some time before the election. There is nothing in the budget about some of the long-term issues. I have mentioned \$160 million for the backlog in road maintenance. We have the Dukes Highway duplication, the Princes Highway duplication, the Victor Harbor Road upgrades, bypassing lanes, upgrades for rail and, literally, a mountain of infrastructure needs that this state must address if it is to go forward. If you go to Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne or Western Australia, you see the infrastructure investments that are going on; you come back to Adelaide and you wonder where the money is going.

In summary, I am sure it is a sweet pre-election budget. So much money can be spent that the government has been able to throw money at a lot of ducks. If you want to shoot ducks, you have to go where the ducks are. I argue that the government has missed an opportunity for real vision in regard to spending. The government is awash with cash and it has missed an opportunity to actually come up with a budget that sets a 10 to 20-year vision. It has missed an opportunity to start on some major transformations that need to occur to build our economy for the future. We are surfing the wave of buoyant economic times. The construction boom has soaked up a lot of the unemployed. Money has been available to spend on retail and we have had low interest rates. When that bubble of activity diminishes you ask yourself: what are the fundamentals of the South Australian economy telling us? How are we positioned for the future? I fear that we will find that we are not positioned well. The time to make hay is when the sun is shining; I do not think we are doing that with this budget or during these buoyant economic times. The Treasurer has inherited a dream. Compared to his predecessor Stephen Baker, who inherited chaos from the same crew that has delivered this budget, he has a dream run. Expenses have blown out, but revenues have

blown out so extraordinarily that we are covering a range of ills. It is not a smart budget: it is a budget that reflects these buoyant times. I hope to see a better one next year.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport):** I want to make some comments in relation to the budget brought down by the state government last week. I, too, like the member for Waite, want to make some comments about how the government managed to find itself in this enjoyable position of being awash with money, not surprisingly so close to the state election. That will surprise no-one in the electorate who could see through the government strategy from day one about building up a lot of cash surpluses or a lot of hollow logs and being ready to spend the money leading up to the March 2006 election. That is essentially what this budget does. It is interesting, if you look at the economic record of the leaders of this government, because there is not one significant economic reform that the current leadership team of this government has supported through the parliament.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** Shop trading hours?

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** I will come back to shop trading hours. The reality is that when previous parliaments debated the Roxby Downs decision, the leadership team argued against it. When the federal government proposed a GST, the current leadership team argued against it. When the previous government argued for the sale of electricity assets to reduce debt, the current leadership team argued against it. Then we find that the current leadership team, having lost all of those arguments, finds itself in a position where, through the Howard government's excellent economic management, the GST is a windfall far beyond its wildest dreams as a state government. Then it has the gall to stand there and say to Peter Costello, for a few weeks at least, that it was not interested in reducing the taxes that were to be reviewed as part of the GST arrangements. Then it came out and said, in the lead up to the budget, as if it were some coup or new information to South Australia, that it was actually going to not only review those taxes but delete them. We really have a state government that has not in its own right made one fundamental, significant economic decision that has contributed in any way to the budget bottom line. It has got a reduced debt through the sale of electricity assets. We have an increase in revenue through the GST and a growth in property valuations on the back of a very strong national economy.

We reduced debt through the sale of the electricity assets, which has reduced interest payments and, indeed, allowed this government to then proceed to continue to reduce debt over a period. While the government will run around telling everyone that it was this government that delivered a AAA credit rating, I can only say: so it should have. It would have been a travesty of large proportions if this government could not have delivered a AAA credit rating, given the circumstances in which it found itself; and it had to do little work and make few decisions to ensure that the AAA credit rating that was always in the pipeline came out the other end. The community would certainly ask, if the Labor Party had won those three crucial debates—that is, not to develop Roxby Downs, not to introduce the GST and not to sell the electricity assets—where exactly would our budget be today?

I think that it is fair to say the budget would be in tatters and the level of service provided to the South Australian community, whether that be through community welfare programs, business subsidies, or whatever, would be nothing like the level of service we enjoy today. It is shallow of the

government to run around taking credit for the AAA rating without acknowledging that those three decisions (which they campaigned against) underpin and fundamentally set the structures in place for this government to deliver a AAA credit rating. I know that the member for Waite, in his opening comments, referred to this principle broadly, and he is absolutely right to bring that to the attention of house and remind the house. If the Labor Party had had its way and we did not have the GST, we would find ourselves nowhere near the position that we do as a state now in relation to revenues.

We know that the GST is a growth tax. It has been a windfall gain for the government. The property market has also provided the windfall gain. The Treasurer has been mirror imaging what other treasurers have done in other states; that is, deliberately understating revenues, or taking the most conservative estimate of revenues and then expressing some surprise later in the financial year that the revenues are way over the estimate. They therefore have a windfall into the head room of the budget, and that can help cover some of the budget pressures from the various agencies as they arise.

We now find ourselves in a position where this government will have approximately \$2.2 billion more in revenue in this next 12 months than was the case in the last budget of the Liberal government in 2001-02. That is a significant increase in revenue. It would have to be something around the 20 per cent mark or better. From memory, our last budget was around the \$9 to \$10 billion—

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** No, eight.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Okay, the Treasurer says eight. That is even worse. If it was \$8 billion and we are now getting an extra \$2.2 billion, that is a difference of over 25 per cent. During the election campaign, Mr Rann, the then Leader of the Opposition and the member for Ramsay, is on record as saying that this government would not have to increase taxes or introduce any new taxes. I think this budget shows how hollow that promise was, and it gives an indication that, when Labor Party members were in opposition, they would say anything. They are taking the Graham Richardson approach to politics; that is, say and do whatever is required to get re-elected. The budget numbers have had significant errors in them in previous years, usually in the revenue area where they have gone about underestimating the revenue involved.

In 2002-03, the figure was \$528 million; in 2003-04, \$794 million; and in 2004-05, it was \$461 million. That is around \$1 800 million in three years. The budget papers present a significant error of about \$600 million a year in revenue. That is a significant error and, if an error of this magnitude occurs again in this set of budget papers, obviously that provides the government with a lot of flexibility to make other announcements closer to the election.

Another example of agencies deliberately underestimating their revenue is the planning department, which for now is in the primary industries area of government, although I am not quite sure why. Planning has underestimated its revenue. For instance, in the year 2003-04, revenue in through fees, etc., was \$9 960 000. The budget in 2004-05 was then estimated at \$2 million less than that—\$7.792 million. Even though they had collected nearly \$10 million, they estimated it at about \$7.8 million—rough enough. The actual 2004-05 was \$14 million, so nearly double the budget of 2004-05. The actuals were around \$14 million. What do they budget this year? They budget \$7.939 million (roughly \$8 million). This year they have budgeted \$6 million less for the revenues into planning. You do not have to be a Rhodes scholar to work out

that that is clearly an underestimate. If your actual in 2003-04 was nearly \$10 million and your actual in 2004-05 was \$14 million, why are you only budgeting \$7.9 million in 2005-06, if it is not a deliberate attempt to build some fat into the budget of that planning area in particular?

Clearly, that is what the government has done in that area. It is a deliberate underestimate of the revenue coming into that particular agency. The Treasurer has made great weight in the media of how this government is a low tax government because it has put out all these tax cuts on the back of the GST agreement. The Treasurer was dragged kicking and screaming to the table by the federal Treasurer about bringing on those tax cuts. Members should remember that this is a Treasurer who did not want the GST. The Treasurer one day might like to explain to the house or to the South Australian public how he was going to cut these taxes if not for the GST. The reality is that he would not have cut the taxes.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** I like the GST.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** The Treasurer now says he likes the GST.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** Exactly.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** And 'exactly' goes on the record. It is interesting that the tax cuts now delivered are really tax cuts as a result of the federal Liberal Party's initiative in bringing in the GST. The member for Waite made a very valid point about the way the government announced \$1.5 billion worth of tax cuts over seven or eight years, whatever it was. You can really pick a figure and just keep multiplying it out. You could come up with all sorts of models about how much tax might or might not be saved, but the reality is that the area where taxes are still relatively unchanged is in households.

The government has introduced the River Murray Levy and is introducing a new natural resource management levy, which replaces the water catchment levy and which is a far broader-based levy because it catches far more things within the definition of what is able to be funded by the levy.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** What about the ESL?

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Indeed, the emergency services levy, as the Treasurer points out, has not reduced under this government.

**The Hon. K.O. Foley:** You introduced it. It was your tax.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** Yes, I introduced it and you voted for it, Treasurer, you might recall. In fact, the Labor Party spoke against it but voted for it not once but twice, if I recall. If I had the revenues in government that the Treasurer had, the question about whether the emergency services levy was ever needed would probably be a different debate than it was when we were in government. However, the reality is that a lot of the taxes being taken off are business-based and transaction-based taxes. The areas still hurting are households. The Treasurer has tried to address this by the one-off \$150 'sorry' payment to pensioners and self-funded retirees for the electricity discount.

Some of my constituents are asking whether this is \$150 that has to be spent on electricity or is it simply \$150 that they can spend on anything they want. That is a detail I am not clear on: the government might want to answer that. They also say that, if they are getting \$150 to reduce electricity prices, why are they not getting some discount in this budget to help with gas prices, particularly for those areas that do not have mains gas and are restricted to bottle gas. They are some of the issues raised by my local electorate. I know that you in your electorate, Mr Speaker, do not have mains gas everywhere and are interested in bottled gas prices.

In relation to some of my portfolio responsibilities, it is interesting to see what this government has done with the environment. My view is that the government has four policies with the environment: license it, levy it, tax it or fine it. Take any one of those policies and you will find it in the last four budgets. The government makes great play of trying to look environmentally friendly, but let us look at the real commitment and the lack of dollars being put into the Environment Protection Authority by this government. All this government has done is transferred the cost of running the EPA from the government to the consumer, to the business community. It works something like this.

In 2003-04, the EPA had revenues from government of about \$11.14 million and in the budget for 2005-06 the revenue from the government is \$7.169 million. The government has basically decreased the amount from the budget to the EPA by about \$4 million a year. In response to that, they have increased the fees and charges that the business community pays. The fees and charges have risen from \$17.597 million to \$20.721 million, an increase of \$3 million. What the government has said to the public is that it is really committed to the EPA and will give it more powers and dress it up as independent—except when it does not like the decision and brings in an indenture bill, as it is doing with OneSteel.

It has simply transferred the cost from government by reducing the funding to the EPA by \$4 million, simply flicking that cost across to the business community through increased licence fees and fines and the like, and it is now an extra \$3 million a year cost to business, simply because this government does not want to fund the EPA to the level that previous governments have or previous budgets have from government grants or government direct funding from the budget. It is an interesting example of how the government is all smoke and mirrors. It talks in here about being tough on the environment and supporting the EPA. It brought the Radiation Protection Authority over to the EPA but, when it comes to writing a cheque from the budget, from revenue to the EPA, it says 'No, we are not going to spend money on it; not the taxpayers. What we want you to do is put the cost up to business.'

So, the actual amount spent is still around the same, still around the \$20-odd million, but more of it is coming from the business community and less from the government itself. So much for its commitment to the EPA. The industrial relations area is interesting. We note that the workplace services budget has gone from \$11.642 million in 2003-04 to a budget of \$14.888 million in 2005-06, an increase of about \$3.2 million. It is interesting that the number of finalised investigations will increase only by 19. Even though we are increasing the expenditure by \$3 million, the number of finalised investigations referred for prosecution will increase by only 19: not a big result for the large increase in the amount of money expended. I do not know what the Employee Ombudsman has done to upset this government, but he has suffered yet another cut in the budget.

In 2003-04 the actual result was \$577 000, in 2004-05 the budget was \$470 000 and this year the budget is \$439 000. The Employee Ombudsman has had a cut of \$140 000 out of an actual result of \$577 000. Obviously, the Employee Ombudsman has somehow offended the government; and, typical of it, if you offend or dare criticise it, this government gangs up on you like schoolyard bullies, as Steve Pallaras learnt this afternoon.

In relation to my electorate, so far I have had a quick look at the budget papers (I have not finished reading them all), but I did notice one thing for dear old Davenport, and that was \$100 000 towards an \$800 000 project at the Bellevue Heights Primary School.

**Mr Caica:** You can't barrel like you did when you were a minister.

**The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** I wish the Bellevue Heights Primary School all the best. I hope that this government does not do what it did to Coromandel Valley Primary School and rip something like \$800 000 off the project. I hope that it does not do that to Bellevue Heights. In relation to the gym at the Blackwood High School about which the member for Colton interjected, the honourable member would be pleased to know that the school has absolutely enjoyed it, even though the honourable member's government said that it was an absolute waste of money. The Heathfield High School gym is, of course, not in my electorate, but, if members wish, they can criticise me for that.

I hope that my electorate does a little better. I am very disappointed that there is no money for Old Belair Road and Main Road, Blackwood. The traffic problems are terrible. I continually write to the government on the issue. From what I can see in the budget papers, not one cent is allocated to address traffic problems in Blackwood.

Time expired.

**Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop):** Generally, I stand up and say that it is with pleasure that I address whatever it is before house, but it is not with pleasure that I address this budget, except in certain respects. I feel sorry for the people of South Australia who would have expected something good from this budget, but the pleasure that I do derive from addressing this budget is that, in the run-up to it, I was a little daunted. I thought, 'Here is a government which has arrived in heaven, thanks to the good work that the Liberal government created for this lot during the 1990s.' It has arrived in heaven. I thought, 'This will be a very difficult budget for us in opposition, because the Treasurer is presented with incredible largesse, and he can do whatever he likes.'

Lo and behold, the budget is presented, I pick up the budget papers and I cannot believe the missed opportunities for the people of South Australia. We have been the cinderella state for a long time. If members cast their minds back 50 and 60 years, they will recall that we did have a great statesman who led this state to a position where we were doing better than the average in Australia. Unfortunately, we had a period of a bit over 20 years, at least, of Labor governments, and South Australia foundered. Not only did it founder but also we got to the point where we had an economic disaster.

It was not just one little issue but a series of issues. A series of total economic mismanagement caused a compounding disaster. When the Liberal Party came to government in 1993 it was faced with economic hell, unlike what this government picked up in 2002. We were faced with economic hell, and the Liberal government, through very sound economic management and taking the most difficult decisions, turned the economic fortunes of this state around and put them onto a very sound footing.

I will not canvass how this government got into power (history will show that it was through quite devious means), but the Labor Party found itself in power and arrived in economic heaven. Let us not forget that three short years down the track this Treasurer is presiding over an economy

and a budget today that is \$2.2 billion better off than the last Liberal budget. It has \$2.2 billion to spend. That equates to \$42 million per week, and is not as a result of one action taken by the Treasurer or his colleagues. Not one action taken by the Labor Party has been responsible for delivering that economic heaven—not one action.

One thing that has disappointed me tonight is that, apart from the member for Enfield, no-one in the government ranks—none of the ministers or backbenchers—has decided to involve himself in this debate. That says plenty. Basically, it says that they cannot believe the budget that this Treasurer has brought before the people of South Australia, either. We can only marvel at what good economic managers might have done with what has happened in South Australia in a little over three years. We can only marvel at the sort of things that might have happened in this state. The reality is that, as a result of the State Bank disaster and the other government disasters associated with that (because it was more than just the State Bank), we should not lose sight of the fact that at least \$3 billion to \$4 billion of debt created from those disasters has meant that South Australia is probably even more than \$4 billion behind the eight ball.

At least \$4 billion worth of opportunity was lost to South Australia at the end of the 1980s. I would argue that \$2 billion to \$4 billion of opportunity has been lost to South Australia over the last three years. As a result of the economic largesse presided over by this Treasurer, through not one decision that he has taken, what have we achieved? Have we taken a giant step forward? Can we say now that South Australia is better prepared to march ahead into this century than it was three years ago?

Can we put a finger on anything which is happening in South Australia today, which was not there three or four years ago and which is there now as a result of government decisions? Sir, the answer to that is no. Why? Because this government, far from being good, sound economic managers as the Treasurer would have us believe, has been extremely timid, and has not been game to take any decisions. South Australia and the people of South Australia into the future will be the losers because of that. The reality is that we have missed opportunities.

I would like to talk about the areas of my shadow portfolio responsibilities, what we may have seen from this budget and how we might have moved forward. I have not yet been through the estimates process. I hope to get a much better understanding of what the government hopes to achieve in those areas, but, to be quite honest, I have been through the budget papers and had a superficial look, and there has been no great advancement. I will very briefly go through them.

In the area of minerals—and this is quite fascinating—the budget for the financial year that we are still in has shown that we were expecting a return from royalties in South Australia—

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** You've lost it.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** I have lost it. I have only lost the book; I have not lost the plot! We were expecting a revenue stream of \$84 million. That was what was budgeted last year. The actual estimated result as this budget was prepared was \$95.3 million.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** That is good budgeting.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** No; it is very poor budgeting. Here we are, 11 or 12 per cent over budget. But here is where the budget—

**Mr Caica:** Are you going on \$8 million?

**Mr WILLIAMS:** No; \$11.3 million out of \$84 million, I would suggest, is more than 12 per cent. Today's budget suggests that the royalty stream will, in fact, fall, so we will go back to \$94 million. This is one of those little areas where we always hear about treasurers hiding money away in hollow logs. Here is a little hollow log. We have probably had a 12 per cent increase in royalty revenues in the past 12 months, and over the next year the Treasurer is predicting that we are going to have a 1½ per cent reduction; that is unbelievable. It is just one little hollow log that I happened to come across in the short time that I have had to look through the figures.

The reality is that \$10.7 billion is the total budget. Let me talk about investment strategies because I think that is where treasurers should get the rubber on the road. They should invest for the future, particularly when you are having good times. As a business manager, I have always taken the attitude that, when you have a cash surplus, when you are having good times, when you know that the next year and the year after are going to be relatively good, you go out and make those investment decisions. You do not put money away for a rainy day by putting it in a bank. Certainly, this Treasurer has not done that; we know that. You put your capital away in something that will provide you with an income stream in the future. You invest in infrastructure.

And what has this government done? Let me just run through its attitude to infrastructure. The government has come out very hairy chested—and this lot is very good at being hairy chested—and said, 'We are going to have an investment program worth \$1.04 billion,' that is \$1 040 million. When you break it down, you realise that that includes the public non-financial corporations (PNFCs). These include things like corporatised Forestry SA, SA Water and a few other government corporatised bodies. The reality is that, when they invest, they have to prove to the Treasurer that their investments are made on a commercial basis, that is, that they will go out and invest money, but there is a guaranteed return.

Of the \$1 040 million in the government's investment program for the ensuing financial year, \$406 million will be spent by the public non-financial corporations. That leaves \$634 million of investment to be made by the general government sector. We have to be very careful when we look at this figure of \$634 million, because one of the other things that this government has done is change the way in which we operate the state fleet. It is not as though the state fleet is going to give us any return in the future. It just that, instead of leasing it, we now own it. We are not going to realise the value for it because we are not going to turn around and sell it. The bureaucracy would collapse without it. But, of that \$634 million, \$118 million is due to the purchase of vehicles for the state fleet. That leaves us with \$516 million of investment in the general government sector out of a total budget of \$10.7 billion. In the last Liberal government budget of the year 2001-02 there was a total of \$1 035.2 million, comparable with what we have now; it is \$8 million shy of what we have today. It is \$8 million shy when this Treasurer has \$2.2 billion more to play with.

The other startling fact is that, relative to what I just said, the PNFCs are spending \$406 million this year, whereas in that financial year, the public non-financial corporations spent \$167.2 million in investments. The reality is that, in the last Liberal government way back in 2001-02, with a total budget of \$8.5 billion, we managed to invest \$864.6 million in the general government business. That followed a similar

investment the year before for the general government sector of \$848 million. The Treasurer and the Premier are out there saying how fantastically we are doing, but it is \$516 million of investment compared with \$864 million. It is a sad day for South Australia.

On Saturday I noticed a small article in *The Advertiser* about what was happening in Western Australia, because the Western Australian budget was also handed down last week. That budget is a little bit bigger than South Australia's. It did not used to be, but it is now, because the Western Australian government has gone about its business completely differently to South Australia for a long, long time. The 20-odd years of Labor governments in the 1970s and 1980s experienced minor disasters, not like the disasters that we had in the late 1980s, early 1990s. The Western Australian government's budget is \$1.4218 billion, so it is 35 per cent bigger than ours. But what is its investment expenditure? For this financial year, it is \$4.7 billion compared with ours—even when you take into account the non-financial corporations of just over \$1 billion.

I point out that Western Australia still owns the electricity assets, and a large slice of that, or \$714 million, relates to electricity capital projects. That still leaves \$4 billion worth of capital works—which is four times what is happening in South Australia—in a budget that is only about 35 per cent bigger. There is \$714 million for water related capital projects; \$101 million to boost trade and export capacity for upgrading Western Australian ports; \$302 million for expanding state and local roads; and \$400 million for the metro rail project. What are we getting in South Australia? We are getting \$50 million for trams. What are we going to get for that? We are going to get a tram going all the way from Victoria Square to North Terrace and then onto Brougham Place. Can you believe that? That is \$50 million to take the tram—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr WILLIAMS:** Would it be an extra two miles? No, it is about 2.5 kilometres for \$50 million. I have spent a bit of time in Perth in the last few years, and one thing I know about Perth relative to Adelaide is that it has a public transport system that works. Why does it work? It is because the Western Australian government has spent money on it, and it has not spent money on a Mickey Mouse project whereby \$50 million would take the tram an extra two kilometres. It has spent the money on providing a decent rail network. There will be capital works in the education area, with \$227 million being provided to build new government schools and TAFE colleges. That is the sort of vision that you would have thought the Treasurer would present to this parliament. That is the sort of provision that you would have thought would be presented to this parliament when he had this largesse of funds to expend.

I noted in the budget papers that the light rail will be extended not only from Victoria Square to Adelaide Railway Station (as was previously announced by the government) but also all the way to Brougham Place in North Adelaide. The Premier announced that project when he was in America the week before the budget was brought down. As the Treasurer pointed out today when he was having a slag at Stephen Pallaras, the budget papers were not printed on Thursday morning; they were printed well before that. But we saw the Premier, on his stage-managed world tour, announcing this project from the other side of the world when it had already been printed in the budget papers. That is the arrogance and the contempt with which he treats the people of South

Australia. I can only repeat what I have said: this is a budget of lost opportunities.

In the time left to me, I will talk very briefly about the electorate of MacKillop, an electorate which punches well above its weight in terms of its contribution to the economy of South Australia. Yet, as I trawl through the budget papers, for an electorate crying out for infrastructure and for a few dollars, absolutely nothing will be spent on new infrastructure projects. Naracoorte is in dire need of a new hospital. Three or four years ago when we were in government, a hospital was virtually on top of the priorities for capital works in the health area—I know that—and now it has been bumped. I do not know when it might happen under this government but, the sooner the Liberal Party gets back into government, the sooner we will provide decent health services at Naracoorte. We know that under this budget health services per se are going to suffer, because the increased amount for health is well below the health inflator. In fact, it is not even half the health inflator, so health services will fall under this budget.

One of the big projects that is needed in my electorate is roads. We are producing above our weight. We are producing fine quality produce that can be exported to the rest of the world, but we are finding it difficult to export it out of our region, let alone out of the state, because the infrastructure that we require to get it to the port, to get it to the point of export, is falling down, and no money is being spent. For regional and rural roads, and state roads, there is no money at all. There is \$20 odd million for three passing lanes, yet last week we sat here until 2 o'clock in the morning debating double demerit points. I ask the government, and I ask the Treasurer, 'Where are the priorities?' Why does the Treasurer not forget about the rhetoric and get on with providing for the needs of the state with the largesse that he has inherited.

Time expired.

**Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett):** Two hours and 55 minutes was the time that I had in government, then the deals were done, the vote was taken and we were on the opposition benches.

*Mr Caica interjecting:*

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** I am almost reduced to tears, as the member for Colton says, over lost opportunities. What could have been done with the money this government has? The last time we had a change of government from Labor to Liberal where did we start? Not with the financial largesse, not with the huge opportunities that this government had when it came into power. In their wildest dreams they could not have imagined the money that would be available. We only have to look at the budget figures, look at the GST that is rolling into this state and that will continue to roll in, to see that there is an extra \$2.2 billion between the last Liberal budget and the \$10.7 billion in the 2005-06 Rann-Foley budget. The Treasurer must be in fiscal heaven.

I cannot believe that this government cannot achieve more; there are huge opportunities for them. In the same way I cannot believe some of the figures in the budget here. When one looks at the windfall that has been received in the last few years, and that will continue to be received by the South Australian government, whether it is Liberal or Labor, it is absolutely amazing. In 2002-03 there was an extra \$528 million windfall from various sources, including GST and property taxes; in 2003-04 there was \$794 million extra; and in 2004-05 there was \$461 million extra on top of what was budgeted. It is a huge amount of money in anyone's language but, unfortunately, in this budget we do not see very

much at all in terms of real courage, real change and real benefit to South Australians. There is lots of newspaper talk and media opportunities about \$1.5 billion in tax relief—that sounds fantastic, but if we look at the fine print (and you should always read the fine print when you are looking at financial documents) we see that this extends out to 2011, with most of it not kicking in until 2009-10. So, it is a great thing, a positive thing, but let us be realistic about it—it is a long way out and there is very minimal immediate effect for the long-suffering taxpayers of South Australia. And in a moment I will talk about how hard the taxpayers of South Australia really are suffering.

The GST that is rolling in here is beyond all belief. Land tax relief of \$380 million has come in this year, yet the government is still going to collect more land tax—more land tax is coming in than they have budgeted for. Most of the taxes that are being forgone were agreed by the former Liberal government with the federal Liberal government—they were not an achievement of this particular government. The taxation revenue that is being collected by this state government just beggars belief. Last year I marched down King William Street with the Dignity for the Disabled people with a placard saying, '\$5 million a day in various state taxes,' but it is far more than that. Just have a quick look at the budget papers: land tax collections this year will actually be \$10 million higher, even after the land tax cut; speeding fine revenue will increase by \$25 million. Payroll tax is one of the most iniquitous taxes out—and I will have arguments with my colleagues about this. Having run small business and having known people in small business, I know how much of a disincentive payroll tax is, and I think both sides of politics should be doing their very best to relieve businesses of payroll tax. It may be easier said than done, if you ask the treasurers. For this particular year payroll tax collections will be up by \$36 million—no relief for small businesses who still have the lowest tax-free threshold of all the states.

We had a huge debate in this place about the reduction in gaming machine numbers, but what we have seen is what we expected and predicted—that when gaming machines have been moved from one business to another, you actually see poorly performing machines going into high performing venues, and so we get an extra \$10 million in gaming machine revenue. The rate of the emergency services levy has not gone up but, because of the increases in capital values, collections of the emergency services levy have gone up by 6 per cent. I think we are working on about a 2.75 per cent CPI in South Australia, according to the budget documents, but the emergency services levy has gone up by 6 per cent.

Water rates, bus fares, car registration fees and other fees have increased by an average of about 3 per cent—most have gone up more and some have gone up less, but the average is 3 per cent. Public transport users will be paying more for their bus fares. We saw stamp duty on cars go down a little but the registration fees went up. It is just juggling, it is sleight of hand. I called it 'prestidigitation' in one of my previous budget speeches last year or the year before, because this budget document is all about juggling and balancing. There are more acts in here than in *Cirque du Soleil*—perhaps we should call it '*Cirque du Foley*'. Total GST revenue coming to South Australia just next year alone will be \$3.46 billion.

In summary, the tax that this government is collecting is \$2.2 billion more than the last Liberal government, and that is a huge amount of money. No matter what size state you are that is a significant input and, when you are the size of South

Australia with a total budget of \$10.7 billion, having that extra \$2.2 billion in there means that you could do a lot. But what have we seen? No cut in hospital waiting lists, no significant improvement in schools, no improvement in road maintenance (and I will be talking about that a bit later on with local government), and certainly no cheaper electricity. We have seen the \$150 rebate going out there, but there are still some issues with that—will everyone get it and will they get it in due time? And if they do get it, they will probably get the smiling face of the Premier on there.

I was bit peeved off about some the advertisements that are going out there. Sure you can change your mind and say, 'Yes, I was wrong in government,' when you talk about political advertisements, but do not go down to Adelaide airport and pretend that that is something you have actually achieved. Sure, we all encourage it and we all want it, both sides of this place—no-one has a monopoly on that—but do not try to give the impression that it is something to do with the Labor government exclusively, and that is the pretence that was put on there.

Budget Paper Volume 3, page 313: you look at the changes in property taxes and the emergency services levy (and we talked about those), and then you go through the other pages and start looking at the charges being made on car registrations. Let us break them down to a daily basis. This is what South Australian taxpayers are paying each and every day—not a year, not a week, not a month, but every day. They are paying \$2.7 million in property taxes, \$1.1 million in gambling taxes, \$2.1 million in payroll taxes each and every day.

In addition, each day \$263 000 is collected in traffic fines. So, every four days, the Treasurer collects over \$1 million in traffic fines. And, he collects \$257 000 in mining royalties per day. When property taxes, gambling taxes, payroll tax, motor vehicle tax, tax on insurance, traffic fines and mining royalties are added together, over \$8 million a day is collected from the taxpayers of South Australia in state taxes alone. What do we see in the budget papers? The government is spending another \$8.6 million on a new taxation revenue system. Why? To increase the efficiency of revenue collection. I think it is pretty good at collecting tax now. It is about time that South Australian taxpayers were given more than lip service, and I will be putting forward the figure of \$8 million a day, because people will understand that such a figure is beyond what most people would see in their life.

Another problem for the state government is explaining not only how much money it has and what it is doing with it but also the blow-out in unfunded superannuation liability—from \$3.2 billion, when it came into government, to \$6.5 billion. Will this be State Bank mark 2? The Rann government has been using accounting tricks to turn deficits into surpluses. The juggling and the sleight of hand are not reflected in the gold cover of the budget. All that glitters certainly is not gold!

I am pleased that the Minister for State/Local Government Relations is in the chamber, because the Local Government Association's media release is like getting a whack on the head and then thanking them. The Local Government Association tries to do its best to stay on side with the government. The media release states:

SA's Local Government Association has welcomed state budget outcomes for local government, including a 37% increase in the state's local road black spot program.

I will look at the funding of that program later. The release continues:

At the same time, it predicts the funding will maintain the SA Government's bottom ranking on funding for local government among mainland states and territories.

LGA President Cr John Legoe said. . . 'Recently released data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed that in the last financial year SA dropped further behind the average state funding for local government.'

Cr Legoe said that if SA received the same level of funding per capita as the next lowest mainland state, local councils would share an additional \$10m in state funding.

I am not saying this, nor is the Liberal opposition: it is the Local Government Association's media release of 26 May 2005 at 3.30 p.m. The press release further states:

This will continue to force a reliance by councils on property rates.

We will see what will happen in a few months, when the shock jocks will beat up on councils. Why? Not only because the state government is cost shifting but also because the federal government is cost shifting. I will not leave the federal government out of this argument, because it certainly needs to pull up its socks. State governments and the federal government are really putting the bite on local government. The media release continues:

Libraries

Library subsidies of \$15.6m made up almost 30% of all state grants to councils. . .

I should have thought that, with the Premier's Reading Challenge, he would be inclined to take back some of that funding. The ratio of funding used to be 75:25, but now it is 50:50 and, as it states in the media release:

. . . with the bulk funded by ratepayers.

Over the last few days we have heard a bit about stormwater, but the media release states:

. . . \$5.4m for stormwater management incorporated some carry-over funding from this. . .

So, they have not spent it all, although I am not sure what is going on; we need to look at it. The media release continues that this:

. . . represents no change on the annual base \$4m program, notwithstanding joint identification of \$160m of priority works to prevent flooding in the metropolitan area and \$39.5m of required works in country areas.

A lot of money needs to be allocated; the government has done so, and the federal government needs to allocate more. The existing funds should be used to help the whole community. As to effluent drainage and the STED scheme, I was staggered when, last week, a lady came to my office about a Housing Trust issue. She complained that she had been told by the trust that it had a 20-year waiting list and that it went back to 1986. In relation to this issue, the LGA media release states:

State funding for innovative common drainage schemes for septic tanks in country areas would receive a CPI increase to \$3.1m. . . but there is a waiting list of around 20 years for communities waiting on state funding.

The media release states that a \$600 000 increase in funding for the roads black spot program is 'a welcome increase to a very low base', and the key words are 'very low base'. Recycling and waste management are huge issues and, at the moment, the EPA is giving councils the heebie-jeebies. The media release continues:

Grants from Zero Waste to councils will see a substantial increase in 2005/06 with kerbside recycling funding going from \$900 000 to \$3.6m.

That sounds great but, again, one needs to read the fine print. The LGA media release further states:

... it was funded from a doubling of the solid waste landfill levy collected and paid by councils to the state government.

So, it is not state government money but money that is coming around in circles from councils. I am not saying that, when the Liberal government is elected next May, there will be money magically to turn this into Nirvana, but we certainly need to focus on these issues, as councils cannot be—

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** Next March.

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** Next March—I am thinking about local government. However, opportunities have been missed by this government. If we look at the 47 items on the budget paper relating to specific purpose payments from state to local government, we see that there is no increase for CPI. The amount allocated to regional crime prevention programs is still \$600 000, so the amount has gone backwards by 3 per cent. There is no increase for CPI in the regional roads program. The state bike fund has increased a little, but only marginally. The catchment management subsidy scheme has increased significantly, but that is from carryover. Natural disaster mitigation is a commonwealth program, and the maintenance of the septic tank and effluent drainage scheme receives only a CPI increase.

As to provisional city bus services, the maintenance of the indexed state contribution is equivalent to those in 2004-05 and has not increased. As I said, regional roads are a real problem. We saw \$2.6 million for the Coast Park initiative. The Rann government is providing more than \$2.6 million for the Coast Park. The City of Holdfast Bay is picking up \$150 000. Let us just see what the Hon. Iain Evans had to say in his press release:

The Rann government has re-announced a Liberal Coast Park initiative using money provided by developers. . . . The re-announced Coast Park scheme was initiated by the former Liberal Government in 2001 announced by then minister Diana Laidlaw. Today the Rann government has announced that \$2.6 million will go toward the park from the Planning and Development Fund. . . . This fund is a statutory trust consisting of contributions from the property development industry and is used to provide open space. . . .

This is not government money: this is money collected by the government from property developers. It is not extra money that this government is taking out of consolidated revenue. I am no economist but the more I read of this budget, and it is a very difficult and convoluted document to fathom—in fact, what did David Bevan say when he was talking about footy tips the other day? Spin, spin, spin—it sounds just like the state budget. The other list of initiatives here listed in the budget documents, involving local government, just go on and we see fault after fault and the truth comes out. A lot of the money is not state government money. The HACC program is a classic example. Of the \$12 million plus, about \$9 million is from the state government. There are just holes all over the place. It is no joy at all.

In my other shadow ministry of sport and recreation, there is certainly no money for the Marion pool. We heard the minister say today that there have been discussions with the federal government. My information is that these discussions have been held, but they were very informal discussions. This state has no FINA approved facility. We cannot have national competitions here.

In the portfolio of volunteers, the Office of Volunteers does a terrific job, but it does not even get a CPI increase. It gets a \$6 000 increase in a \$1.426 million budget. The office needs another \$33 million to keep up with CPI.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** \$33 million?

**Dr McFETRIDGE:** It needs another \$33 000 to keep up the CPI. In OCBA, one pleasing thing, and I will finish off on this, because I know I have another 10 minutes in my grievance and I will be speaking about my electorate of Morphett and trams, because there is a lot to say about the scratchings on the bits of paper that this government calls a tram plan. In the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs, and this is another change too, we do not go from spending: we go from the net cost of the service. It has gone from negative \$1.876 million to negative \$3.174 million. There is a significant increase in costs there, and I congratulate the government if the net cost is being used to fund the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs to assist consumers in South Australia because we know that, in everything from dodgy builders to dodgy car dealers to the other rip-off merchants that are out there, the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs does a fantastic job. We hope to see the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs being given the legal clout it needs to control the bouncers out there. We have had legislation go through this place.

We hope that the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs can use that extra money for that. The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs is trying very hard to implement changes and reforms to the real estate industry. This budget is a huge windfall for this government. I would have loved to have been on the government benches to have had this money at the disposal of the Liberal government. The sad part about it is that we cannot spend money on everything tomorrow. The opportunities have not been grasped and, while we would love to do better if we had the opportunity, we do not. We know why there was a change in government. Deals were done and decisions were made at the time. I bet those who made those decisions now regret them very severely. South Australians certainly regret those decisions, and we will just wait to see what really does happen with this budget.

**Mr SCALZI (Hartley):** This is the Rann Labor government's fourth and last budget before the March election in 2006. It is important to assess this government at this particular stage because, after March 2006, it is not certain that this government will be there to control the levers on trying to make South Australia a better place and to promote growth and deal with the many problems that South Australians have to face in health, education, law and order and, in particular, an ageing population. If we look at this government's budget and relate it to its promises, we all know that many on the government benches feel proud to say that Premier Mike Rann is Mr 90 Per Cent. The reality is in electoral terms because they are the polls that count. We have that Premier who is Mr 49 Per Cent because the present Labor Rann government is really an illegitimate government.

**Mr Caica:** Oh, get out!

**Mr SCALZI:** They say, 'Get out,' and I know that members opposite feel uncomfortable. The one thing that makes a politician feel comfortable is when they get over the line on election night. Although I have had to wait at times a couple of weeks, it is a good feeling when you know that you got over 50 per cent of the two-party preferred vote. Members opposite feel uncomfortable, even though they have Mr 90 Per Cent at the polls leading them, because they did not get over 50 per cent of the vote.

What has kept them in government is the compact of the former speaker, the member for Hammond. We were going to have an era of enlightenment, reform, a constitutional



convention and certainty in this place. What do we have? Under Labor, the then Leader of the Opposition said that there would be no more privatisation; we will fix our electricity system and build an interconnector to New South Wales; have cheaper power, better schools and more teachers, as well as better hospitals and more beds. They said that proceeds from all speeding fines will go to police and road safety, that they would cut government waste and redirect millions now spent on consultants to hospitals, schools and Labor priorities. Mr Ninety Per Cent (Mr Forty-Nine Per Cent electorally) should look at himself and the government. Are the ads on television what was promised?

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** Is this relevant?

**Mr SCALZI:** The member for Mount Gambier protests. I think he protests too much. The Independent member for Mount Gambier is now part of cabinet—and he was Independent under the former minority government—

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** Still is. Be careful, Joe.

**Mr SCALZI:** And still is. A budget is about setting priorities and stating from where we will get the revenue and how we will spend it. The budget is a tool to achieve the goals which a government sets out to achieve. I am not saying that the sky will fall down because of this budget, but the reality is that this government has missed opportunities. I think it has been more concerned with staying in power than dealing with the problems of power for the average household. Out of its guilt, it will give \$150 to pensioners and self-funded retirees—and there is a question mark about that? I refer to an article in *The Australian* by Michelle Wiese Bockmann which states:

The South Australian government will post a \$150 power bill handout to 225 000 welfare recipients within weeks, but another 30 000 people eligible for the sweetener must register by September to receive the money.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** What is the point?

**Mr SCALZI:** The point is that we are getting used to these great announcements by this government. We are getting used to seeing Mr Ninety Per Cent (or thereabouts)—Mr Forty-Nine Per Cent electorally—

*The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Unlike the member for Mount Gambier—

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** Be careful now.

**Mr SCALZI:** I can state this quite confidently: for all the time that I have been a member of this place, my primary vote has always been higher than that of my Labor opponent or the next opponent.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** So what?

**Mr SCALZI:** The member for Mount Gambier knows that in the 1997 election he was here through the grace of God, his work and the preferences of the Labor Party. However, I have to admit that at the last election in 2002 he had one of the highest votes, and I commend him for that. Is that true—yes, it is. If the honourable member accepts that, he must accept the 1997 result as well. Let us look at the budget strategies. The government continues to benefit from the GST deal and debt reduction due to the ETSA privatisation, as has been noted by Standard and Poors, which this government opposed. The GST was opposed—the sky was going to fall down. I am not saying that this budget will bring the sky down but members opposite were saying that the GST was a terrible thing.

In fact, the former member for Hartley (Hon. Terry Groom) said to me at many functions, 'Joe, you are working hard but this GST will be your undoing.' Is it not ironic that it is the GST revenue that has enabled this government do

what it is doing? Members should acknowledge the success of the federal economy, the GST revenue, the revenue from land tax, the continuing growth of gambling revenue and—

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** How much is that?

**Mr SCALZI:** It is in the budget. It is much more than was expected. Let us look at what some of the commentators are saying. Ian Yates from COTA—

*The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Ian Yates says:

Senior citizens will welcome extra money for Home and Community Care next year, but especially the commitment to fully match commonwealth funds over the next four years—the first time this commitment has been made.

I would like to give the government a tick: finally, it lowered its pride and said that it is going to match the commonwealth. Mr Yates continues:

Pensioners and other retirees will be pleased with the one-off—remember it says here a one-off. Mr Yates does not tell lies—

—electricity bonus to help them meet higher power costs. . . On the downside, we are disappointed there was not extra money for dental services for older people.

I agree with what he says, because dental problems are a problem with an ageing population. I am sure that many members have had constituents come to them about dental problems. It is sad that we are not really dealing with this as we should. In education, the member for Mount Gambier will recall that Andrew Gohl from the Australian Education Union came to Mount Gambier to have a little bit of a protest when the parliament was sitting there. He would have remembered about the problem with the buses, as well, when the Premier went through the back door. I am told that the Premier also had some difficulty in Modbury on the weekend, when he was faced with some protesters.

**Mr Meier:** I believe he ran away, actually.

**Mr SCALZI:** Did he run away?

**Mr Meier:** Drove away.

**Mr SCALZI:** Drove away. We must get it right.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** Is there any relevance in this?

**Mr SCALZI:** The relevance is that whenever there is a problem the Premier does not front up. For the first land tax protest at Felixstow in my electorate last year, the poor Minister for Infrastructure (Hon. Pat Conlon) was there to address the meeting: the Premier was nowhere to be seen. Earlier this year at Norwood, at the second land tax meeting, it was up to the Deputy Treasurer to face the full hall.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Deputy Premier. Members opposite are more interested about titles than dealing with the problems.

**Mr MEIER:** On a point of order, for seven minutes off 20 my honourable colleague has been subjected to a barrage of interjections from the members opposite. I believe it is high time that he was given your protection to continue his speech without this continual interjection from members opposite.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Thompson):** I point out that both making interjections and responding to interjections is out of order, so perhaps all parties would abide by the standing orders.

**Mr SCALZI:** I was referring to the land tax issue, which has been a real concern in my electorate because an ageing population—

**Mr RAU:** On a point of order, some of us are having difficulty with the relevance of the speech. I am interested in hearing what the honourable member has to say about the

budget, and I am not sure that he is focusing on that issue. That is why there might be some people with puzzled questions coming across the chamber.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I remind the member for Hartley that this debate is directly related to the budget. There is opportunity for wider ranging debate later in the grievance speeches. I would ask the member for Hartley to be tied in his comments.

**Mr SCALZI:** I was about to commend the Premier for giving some relief for land tax.

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I know because it is in the budget papers. I know that it was the Premier because I saw his photograph on some of the refunded cheques. However, As we know, it does not go far enough. The government is going to collect more than it is going to give out, and it is a short measure before the March election. I want to come back to what Andrew Gohl had to say about the education budget. I have had representatives of the union speak to me, and they are not very happy. Teachers are under stress with the things they have to cope with: the disruptions, the absenteeism and the health problems they have to deal with for students in the classrooms. Andrew Gohl stated:

Public school spending has been on the backburner while the state worked hard to recover its financial footing, yet this budget fails to make up lost ground. We need genuine, across-the-board action to reduce class sizes and assist learning. We need to ease teacher workloads, so they can give children the individual help they deserve, and we need facilities suited to 2005, not 1985. We also need to get good teachers into country schools and keep them there.

I am sure the member for Mount Gambier would agree with that. There is a problem that graduates do not remain in the classroom and you have an ageing population of teachers, and it has to be addressed. It is the same with nurses. I would like to talk a little about payroll tax. The government came out saying how great it is. The reality is that, as part of the GST agreement, that was going to happen. It is a little like the GST—

*The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** I want to get back to this payroll tax.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hartley will focus on the Appropriation Bill.

**Mr SCALZI:** I thought that taxes were to do with the budget.

*The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:*

**Mr SCALZI:** Well, taxes are revenue, and that is how you get the revenue so that you can have expenditure. This really concerns me. The Rann government is ripping off large charitable organisations, which are being slugged tens of thousands of dollars in payroll tax each year. Payroll tax is a tax against employment. It is not a good tax at any time. It is really insidious when you have payroll tax on institutions such as Greening Australia, the RSPCA and the Animal Welfare League. Last year, the RSPCA was slugged \$70 380. We know that the RSPCA gets contributions from the general public.

In other words, it is tax after tax. Members might not be aware that South Australia is the only state that imposes payroll tax on institutions such as the Animal Welfare League and Greening Australia, which employ a lot of young people. It is a disincentive because the more you employ the more tax you have to pay. It is really sad that these institutions are paying tax, because it is a disincentive. They make contributions. I will present a petition to the parliament suggesting that we look at abolishing these taxes. Indeed, petitions are

being signed at this very moment. Members will know when the petition is presented to the house. We all know that the government has a budget surplus—

**The SPEAKER:** The honourable member's time has expired.

**Mr SCALZI:** —and this is an opportunity to create the climate for future growth.

Time expired.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Unley.

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL (Unley):** I am minded of the hymn, 'Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and in fear and trembling stand.' For the benefit of those opposite, it is certainly an Anglican hymn, but I think that it was written by John Wesley whom the Uniting Church currently claims as its own. I viewed this budget with not only the disappointment that has characterised many of my colleagues' contributions but also with a deal of fear.

**The Hon. R.J. McEwen:** With fear?

**Mr BRINDAL:** With fear. The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam—which *Hansard* will have to look up because I am not sure how to spell it—said:

The moving finger writes;

and, having writ,

Moves on: nor all your piety nor all your wit

. . . can cancel nor remove one jot of it.

I viewed this budget with some fear because of what it represents and what it does not represent to the people of South Australia. The Rann Labor government has been in power for three long years and, in that three years, it has been afforded a unique opportunity by the people of South Australia to move this state forward. Any of us—and I do not care where you sit in this house—who get the privilege to sit on the frontbench for any period of time are very lucky. Many people serve their whole parliamentary career without ever sitting on the front bench. Whichever party is elected to government or whichever party gains government, it is a great privilege, and a privilege that should never be underestimated or undervalued.

I think that history will record the great shame of the first three years of the Rann Labor government as wasted opportunity. Indeed, I would say squandered opportunity and wasted effort. This budget, more than the last two, characterises all those things. The Minister for Infrastructure scuttles from the chamber, but why I said—

*An honourable member interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** He does; he has; I observed it; and I have now fitted it into my speech.

*Mr Rau interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** No, it was a retrospective little comment. I fear this budget because I go, whenever I can, as many of us do with the privilege of parliamentary travel, to visit other parts of the world. I have long been bemused by South-East Asia. I remember when this parliament afforded me the privilege of going on a CPA conference to Kuala Lumpur, and standing at my hotel room, looking out the window, and seeing in about 90° (that was viewable from my window) of a 360° circumference around the city something in excess of 100 cranes on the skyline.

Everywhere one looked in Kuala Lumpur there were major building and infrastructure improvements. A new airport was being built. The honourable member need not bow to me; that is quite disrespectful. There were major infrastructure improvements and cranes everywhere. I

remember coming back and asking some of the pundits in Australia about it. The pundits in Australia said, 'It is all right. It is just the Asian bubble, and the Asian bubble will burst.' A couple of years later indeed it did burst. I have been back to Kuala Lumpur and do members know what? All the train lines are still there. The new airport is still there. All the new buildings are still there, as are the new roads. I am sure that some developers might have gone bankrupt. I am sure that some bankers might have taken a hit and, indeed, the government might have felt a twitch in its back pocket. But Kuala Lumpur and Malaysia still have the infrastructure. Every time I go to Bangkok, which is reasonably often, I note—

*Mr Caica interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** Well, the member for Colton need not be jealous; he can come with me next time, if he likes. He might do some work for a change, instead of going on these more casual trips that he takes. Every time I go to Thailand, I note that the place is never standing still. A sky train has been put in in the past few years and, recently, an underground was added. There are motorways being built all the time, and infrastructure is being added. Unfortunately, in the past three years in Adelaide, what have we seen? We have seen very little. In fact, we have seen nothing. We have seen so little that—

*Members interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** Well, if members opposite want to comment on my trips to Thailand, they are more than welcome. They can make a contribution and say what they like. And, when they say what they like, then I will say what I like about them.

**Ms Thompson:** It does not come out of the budget.

**Mr BRINDAL:** It actually does come out of the budget because, if the member had been here more than two minutes, she would know that the parliament appropriates such moneys for the use of this parliament that includes parliamentary travel. Therefore, parliamentary travel is a budget item. So when she knows enough to correct me, I will listen, but in the meantime she might—

*Mr Rau interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Enfield is out of order.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I see three years of squandered opportunity. I have the privilege of being on the Public Works Committee, and I know just how little work we have done in the past three years compared with the work that was done when speaker Lewis was chairman of the Public Works Committee. It met every week, sometimes twice a week and often during the parliamentary breaks. We are lucky when we get enough work before us to sit. Indeed, we are lucky, because on Wednesday we have the bridges coming up. Now there is a budget item. It is probably the first truly major infrastructure project to be put forth by this government. We have had a few little road projects. I will denote the Port River Expressway as a significant project but, apart from that, there have been a couple of bypasses—

**Mr Scalzi:** What about Sturt Street?

**Mr BRINDAL:** The member says, 'What about Sturt Street?' In the picture of government infrastructure, it should be driven forward. Projects like Sturt Street are important but they are not the big ticket items. They are not the redevelopment of the convention centre; they are not, rightly or wrongly, the building of a wine centre; the reconstruction of a soccer stadium; the redesign of North Terrace; the building of the Southern Expressway; the driving of the tunnels through the Hills to give access to Adelaide; the improve-

ments to Cross Road, which finished eight years ahead of schedule; the ongoing improvements to Portrush Road; or the standardisation of a rail line that linked the nation. Sturt Street School, I am afraid, does not quite fall into that class.

The problem is that, in the past three years, nothing has fallen into that class. In fact, the Premier, to get a platform for his budget, had to borrow the airport, a project which was originally worked for very hard by Premier Olsen, which was signed off finally under this government but to which this government has contributed nothing.

**Mr Koutsantonis:** So what?

**Mr BRINDAL:** The member for West Torrens asks, 'So what?' We are talking about the budget. It is a bit rum when the only way that the Premier has to promote his budget is to use a set for which he paid no money. If this Premier is genuine about his commitment to the state, why was he not standing in front of an infrastructure project such as the Bakewell Bridge, which is dear to the member for West Torrens? Why is just coming before us just now? And why—the member for West Torrens might tell me in the Public Works Committee—does my mail state that it has to be started by January?

**Mr Koutsantonis:** What?

**Mr BRINDAL:** My mail is that that bridge must be started by January—come hell, rain or high water. Why would that be? Why, after waiting four years, would this government want an infrastructure project started by January next year? Well, I think the electors could answer that question, and I do not think they are silly.

**Mr Koutsantonis:** They will on 13 March.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Well, we will see.

**Mr Rau:** Well, at least we haven't wasted money.

**Mr BRINDAL:** One of the members opposite interjected, 'Well, at least we haven't wasted money,' and that is why I truly fear this budget. It is true that this government, unlike previous Labor governments, has wasted a lot less money. Unlike previous Labor governments, this government has been much more cautious than its predecessors. But caution is not necessarily a good thing in a world that is advancing. Caution was written about in the parable of the talents, where one person got their talents and hid them under the carpet, so that—

**Mr Koutsantonis:** What would you say?

**Mr BRINDAL:** What would I say? I would say to the member for West Torrens that the people of South Australia give any government one opportunity. That means that you should get every talent possible and use it to the best of your ability to give maximum return to the people of South Australia. That is what this government has not done. This government has been so worried about its record, about its AAA rating and about not falling over its own feet between now and the next election that it has done nothing. And that is a matter for which history will judge the government badly.

On that score, no greater issue comes to mind than law and order. Here is a government that is keen on law and order. How do we know that? Not only does the budget say it but the government says it. Every hour of every day on every radio station, on every TV station and via every telephone call-in anything you like—we hear the mantra, 'We are tough on law and order.' We passed legislation to knock down bikie fortresses. We have Operation Avatar, which has tankers carting away the toxic liquids that they produced; and containers to take away the drugs that they are collecting, if you believe the Premier. But we are not knocking down bikie fortresses—one has been knocked down. We are not busting

up amphetamine laboratories because we have an Attorney who has not got the gumption to come in here and pass the law that sees that people who cook amphetamines in suburban homes can be prosecuted on a reasonable chance of a jury convicting them. We have a law that is so stupid that you can cook up amphetamines, the police can bust in, the amphetamines can be cooking on the stove and, so long as there is no end product, the police simply must walk away, because every part of the process is legal until there is an end product. If the Attorney thinks that that is tough on law and order, I do not know what is.

We can go on. You might be aware, sir—and you have spoken a lot about this over the years—that there were two stabbings on the weekend, gangs running riot around the place and people getting stabbed in this city, and bikie gangs less than a week before having public brawls at music awards. I admit that those brawls were not in the city, but they were public brawls between warring bikie gangs, right in the midst of innocent civilians. They were brawls, if media reports are correct, over the control of the sale of amphetamines to our kids, and the running of many of the venues in this city at night. We have legislation, sir—and you know, because I think you have supported it, that I am a great supporter of reform of the prostitution industry. We have no reform now, we have a Police Commissioner who says that the laws are so archaic that he will simply not police brothels, and we have this government not willing to bring in anything to regulate them. So, there is no law operable in regard to prostitution, and if people think that they have a brothel coming to a house near them they may well be correct, because no-one is policing it and no-one is controlling it. And that, sir, is the Rann Labor government being tough on law and order. Nothing about amphetamines, little to control bikies, nothing about open gang warfare in our streets, and bodies turning up all over the parklands with monotonous regularity.

**Mrs Geraghty:** Don't get down into that level.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I am not getting down into any level. Count the number of deaths in the parklands this year and tell me that that is acceptable.

**Mrs Geraghty:** Don't do it per annum; go back and look 10 years.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I will go back and look 10 years; I will go back and look 20 years. We have a level of deaths in our city at present that is unacceptable. We have not got enough police walking the streets, or riding their horses—

**Mrs Geraghty:** It didn't happen in the eight years that you were in government. If you are sinking to this level, you might as well give up.

**The SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr BRINDAL:** The mantra always is: what about when you were in government? There is a simple answer: we are not in government. Forget about the eight years when we were in government and answer a simple question: what about now? Not last year, not the year before and not the year before that. Now you are in government and now you need to be doing something, and you are doing nothing.

*Members interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The house will come to order. The members for West Torrens, Giles and Torrens will stop interjecting. The member for Unley has the call.

**Mr BRINDAL:** As I said, it is not about what we did for eight years, it is about now, because now includes policies that we put into place, policies that this government has developed which are actually working, and those policies are

to reinhabit the city. There are more people living in the city of Adelaide than there have been for many decades, and there are more international students here. The city begins to thrive again, the city begins to be a vibrant city like many of the other cities in the world. But, unfortunately, it is not a safe city. I feel safer, often, walking around Bangkok at night than I do in parts of my own capital city, and if you think that is something I am proud of—

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**Mr BRINDAL:** If that is something that the member for West Torrens wants to turn into a joke, let him tell his electors that, because when you go to South-East Asia and feel safer than you do in a first world capital city like Adelaide, there is something very wrong.

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

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

**Mr BRINDAL:** Instead of pitching for any loose vote that it thinks it can get its hands on, instead of spinning the platter and playing the record, this government has less than a year left to put its money where its mouth is and actually institute some policies. The first three years are a tragic failure. The first three years are an abject disappointment. This budget is nothing more than a cheap series of bribes and petty tricks.

**Mrs Geraghty:** You haven't read a page.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I have read more than enough of the budget to see the substance in it—because there is none. You can read page after page after page, and all it is is more of the same. To quote Shakespeare: this is 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'. It may well be the third Foley budget, but I repeat: this is 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.' I promise you, Mr Speaker, because I hope you survive to sit in the next parliament, that in the next parliament when we are ranged along those benches, when we are sitting in serried order over that side of the house—

*Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for West Torrens is warned, and he will be named in a minute. The member for Hartley will also; he has been warned earlier.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Sir, the Rann Labor government will not even be remembered in its own lunch time. Two minutes after we are elected to government the Rann Labor government will be the sad after dinner burp which rather embarrasses us and which we would all rather forget.

Debate adjourned.

#### ROAD TRAFFIC (EXCESSIVE SPEED) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL

Second reading debate resumed.

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens):** I rise to support the second reading of the budget. Can I say to the member for Unley, with his carpetbags, preparing to move north to greener pastures because he has been booted out like a relative no-one loves any more—

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order, sir. I believe you will find in Erskine May that 'carpetbagger' has been ruled unparliamentary. It suggests bribes, and I am certainly not a carpetbagger, nor do I associate with them. I object.

**The SPEAKER:** It is an inappropriate phrase, anyway, but the member is not speaking to what he should be speaking to, and that is the Appropriation Bill.

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will, of course, follow your guidance and wisdom on these matters, not that of members opposite. I will attempt to lift the level of this debate, because what I hear opposite is the usual whingeing, whining, carping and mocking—there is never anything constructive to say. We have even seen some policy on the run.

The former member for Unley has abandoned his constituents because they have thrown him out like a relative they do not want, and who has overstayed his welcome. They have thrown him out because they do not want him any more—

**Mr BRINDAL:** I rise on a point of order. The member for West Torrens is maligning and misrepresenting my electors, and I do not believe he is allowed to do so.

**The SPEAKER:** I did not hear the precise words but the member for West Torrens needs to focus on the Appropriation Bill.

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** It is interesting to note that the member for Unley gets up to defend his electors but not his constituents; because he is not seeking re-election from his constituents, he is seeking election from his electors. Already, in his budget reply, he did not mention Parkside, Unley, Goodwood, Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens once. And he did not do that because he has abandoned them. He could not even find—

**Mr BRINDAL:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker, it is disorderly to ascribe motive, and the member for West Torrens is ascribing motive. That is clearly disorderly.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for West Torrens is defying the chair, and banging his desk will result in his being named. He will cease doing that. The member for West Torrens must focus on the bill or else he can take a seat.

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Of course, I enjoy your protection from members' interjections, and I thank you for being impartial, honest and fair. There is a measure in the budget of which I am very proud, and that is the \$150 payment to every pensioner or concession card holder in South Australia. Over a quarter of a million South Australians will be receiving a one-off payment of \$150 courtesy of the South Australian government. The government is right on one issue, sir—that money is better in the bank accounts of these constituents than in the bank account of the government. There are no hollow logs in this government—not one—because we care about those who need it the most now. We do not wait and hand it out just before an election: we throw our cards on the table now.

We have invested in more police. We are going to have 4 000 police officers in this state before the end of the year—the most we have ever had in our history, and thanks to whom? It is thanks to this Labor government. Not because of members opposite and their whingeing and whining, mentioning what they could have done in their eight and a half years had there not been factional infighting, had there not been personality clashes, had there not been leaking and fighting amongst themselves, getting hamstrung crossing the street to leak documents to us. If they had only one more term they could have done all these things that they are promising now, Mr Speaker.

I can tell you one thing that they are not doing that we are; that is, we have a considered, well thought out, fiscally responsible policy which has delivered a AAA credit rating to this state, giving AAA credit rating bonuses to the people of South Australia. What do members opposite think about that? They whinge and moan, trying to take credit for it and saying, 'It was really us, we are the ones who really did the work. If only we had two more years we would have got it; if only we had two more years we would have had extra police; if only we had two more years we would have built an extension at the QEH, at the Women and Children's Hospital, at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and at the Lyell McEwin. If only we had two more years.' Eight and a half years was not enough, Mr Speaker. If only they had just a little bit longer. The people of South Australia see right through them. They know what they are—a bunch of whingeing—

**Mr BRINDAL:** On a point of order, sir, I think that clock is wrong: my watch clearly says 10 p.m., so I think that the house should adjourn.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! That is not a point of order.

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** Before it reaches 10 p.m. I just inform the member for Unley that Prospect oval is at Menzies Crescent, Prospect. If he needs a lift I am happy to go down to Unley, to the constituents whom he is abandoning, with the moving truck that is outside—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member will come back to the bill.

**Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** I will, Mr Speaker. I will take him down to Prospect oval so that he can meet his new electors so that they know exactly whom they are voting against. I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later date.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 10.01 p.m. the house adjourned until Tuesday 31 May at 2 p.m.