

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 31 May 2005

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

INFANT HEARING IMPAIRMENT

A petition signed by 37 electors from South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to implement a screening program to detect permanent hearing impairment in infants by the age of two months and adopt the recommendations of the evaluation report into the newborn screening and assessment pilot program conducted in 2003-04, was presented by the Hon. D.C. Kotz.

Petition received.

HOSPITALS, GLENSIDE

A petition signed by 27 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to retain Glenside Hospital as a specialised rehabilitation hospital for the mentally ill, was presented by the Hon. D.C. Kotz.

Petition received.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The house will come to order. People who submit petitions are entitled to be heard with the courtesy they deserve.

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT

In reply to **Hon. R.G. KERIN** (7 February).

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:

What action has he taken to address the extremely low clearance rate in the civil and criminal jurisdictions of both the Supreme and District courts in the state?

In January 2005, the Productivity Commission published the Report on Government Services 2005. The Report records data about court administration for the year 2003-04.

Criticism of the efficiency of the Courts by reference to this table was misplaced. The clearance rate is not an indicator of efficiency.

The clearance rate records nothing more than the ratio of lodgments to dispositions in the year in question. A clearance rate of 100 per cent indicates that a court is disposing of cases at the same rate as lodgments are being made. A clearance rate of less than 100 per cent indicates that in the coming year a court's performance against time standards might worsen, because the number of cases on hand will be greater than in the preceding year.

A better guide to efficiency is provided by the 'backlog indicator'. This measures the proportion of a court's case load that is exceeding the timeliness standard.

Table 6.9 records this information for criminal matters. Owing to a misunderstanding, the backlog indicator for criminal appeals is not reported for South Australia. In fact it is zero, that is, no cases took more than 12 months. In that respect the Supreme Court's performance is equal to the best in Australia.

For non-appeal criminal cases the backlog indicator for cases taking longer than 12 months is 33.3 per cent.

A check has been made by the Court staff of the cases in question. They number 16. A counting error means that the number recorded should be a little less than 16, and the indicator should be about 25 per cent. Of the 12 cases that took longer than 12 months, about five are cases that could never have been disposed of within 12 months. They include the trials arising out of the discovery of bodies at Snowtown, and several other cases which, without going into details, simply could not be disposed of within 12 months.

The backlog indicator for the District Court, about criminal cases taking longer than 12 months, is 21.2 per cent. Two other District courts had a lower backlog indicator and two were higher.

Table 6.11 records the backlog indicator in relation to civil cases.

The backlog indicator for civil appeals taking more than 12 months in the Supreme Court is zero per cent. That is the best result in Australia.

The backlog indicator for non-appeal cases taking more than 12 months is 23.6 per cent, which is also the best result in Australia. That demonstrates that a failure to clear cases as fast as lodgments is not necessarily an indicator of efficiency.

The District Court's backlog indicator for appeal cases was the best in Australia. For non-appeal cases taking more than 12 months, the backlog indicator was 42.9 per cent. Three courts had a better result and one court had a worse result. All five figures are bunched quite close together, the range being from 34.9 per cent to 43.7 per cent.

This brief analysis indicates the care that is needed in interpreting the figures. On the whole, the performance of the two courts appears satisfactory.

The clearance rate does suggest, nevertheless, that the performance might decline in the year 2004-05. It might decline because of an increase in the number of cases on hand. Whether the backlog indicator does decline, remains to be seen.

AIR WARFARE DESTROYERS

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

Leave granted.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The house will come to order. We know that members are filled with excitement. I make it quite clear today that any member who defies the chair or creates disorder will suffer the penalty provided in standing orders. Yesterday, two members went very close; hopefully, they will not disregard standing orders today.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Today, South Australia and our defence industry have received a massive and overwhelming vote of confidence from the Australian government and the nation. South Australia will build the air warfare destroyers.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Today, it is with great delight that I report to the parliament—mission accomplished! After 2½ years of work by a team of experts, who are headed by retired Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce and who have worked day and night, across many continents, we have won. Today, the defence minister, Robert Hill, announced in Canberra that the ASC in South Australia and the Osborne Maritime Precinct have been chosen as the site for consolidation of the \$6 billion air warfare destroyer contract. This means that South Australia and Osborne will become the centre of a new 21st century Australian naval shipbuilding industry.

In addition to producing many of the AWD modules, South Australia will undertake final assembly of the ships, as well as contributing to the sophisticated systems integration, IT and electronics functions required by the project. The Osborne site, where the air warfare destroyers will be built, is the home of the Collins class submarines, which were a first for Australia and which are the best conventionally powered submarines in the world. These are vessels of which all Australians, all South Australians and all ASC workers can feel proud.

This is a great day for South Australia, because this will be a transformational project for our state's future. This is not just about building ships; as I have been saying all along, this is about building a naval ship building industry for the next 50 to 100 years. The South Australian government has been prepared to make a major investment in skills and infrastructure at the site (amounting to \$140 million) because of the benefits this project brings, together with the potential to transform our regional economy. It will bring to this state: a

total of 3 000 additional direct and indirect jobs; a major boost to our state's economy over the next decade and more; the opportunity to provide high-tech goods and services to these ships by providing through-life maintenance and upgrades; and an untold potential for new technologies and spin-offs to other parts of South Australian industry, particularly the many small and medium enterprises that are the backbone of our economy.

These are high-tech jobs with a bright future. To repeat briefly what I disclosed last week, our \$140 million investment includes: a massive ship lift, transfer system, wharf and associated dredging; more than 30 hectares for sub-contractors to set up operations on site and establish strong and efficient supply chains; a new one-site maritime skills centre that will train the work force to support the destroyer contract; \$8 million to be spent on various work force and skilled migration programs; and a centre for excellence in defence industry systems capability—a partnership between the South Australian government, the Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the University of South Australia, which will build strengths and capabilities in systems engineering and software systems research. These measures are to be complemented from early next year with the establishment of a branch of the prestigious Carnegie Mellon University. Carnegie Mellon rates at the top of the US league of universities in such areas as computer science, and IT and robotics, strengths that will be key to delivering the AWD project successfully.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I remind members opposite that the Carnegie Mellon venture is a joint effort between me and Alexander Downer, and congratulations to Alexander Downer for having a vision for this state's future.

I have often said that a decision in favour of South Australia as the building site for the AWDs would be a decision in the national interest. In these uncertain times, where we face new national defence challenges and the threat of terrorism, what Australia needs is a decision in the interests of the safety and security of all Australians, both now and into the future. South Australia has won the role as the consolidation site for the air warfare destroyers in the face of stiff competition from Victoria.

I want to pay tribute to Victorian Premier Steve Bracks for the huge effort he and his state made towards bidding for this project. It was a very competitive bid which made our job all the harder. I am pleased that Victoria is also a winner, having picked up substantial work in module construction. The reality is that a project of this scale cannot be undertaken by one state alone. This is part of the national approach to national defence and security that I mentioned earlier.

I also want to pay particular tribute to Western Australian Premier Geoff Gallop—I have just spoken to him by phone—who offered explicit support for South Australia's bid, because he recognised that our solution better served the national interest. I also pay special tribute to the members of the Defence Industry Advisory Board, a broad-based and bipartisan body, which includes: the Economic Development Board Chairman, Robert Champion De Crespigny; former coalition defence minister, Ian McLachlan, who did a terrific job; the former Chief of Navy, David Shackleton; John White, the former head of Transfield, who guided the Anzac ships project; Malcolm Kinnaird; and, of course, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce to name just a few. Each of them will be named at a later date.

I also thank far-sighted union leaders Janet Giles from Unions SA, John Camillo of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, Wayne Hanson of the Australian Workers' Union, Bob Geraghty of the Communications, Plumbing and Electrical Trades Union, as well as ASC management for its work in brokering a groundbreaking enterprise bargaining agreement focused on productivity improvement and dispute avoidance.

I also thank the opposition, particularly the Leader of the Opposition, for its support and his support. I also thank all the business leaders who have been so incredibly supportive of our bid, including Business SA's Peter Vaughan, who travelled overseas with me last year to Spain and Germany (it is going to be a Spanish design as we predicted), Patricia Crook at Business SA and Steve Myatt from the Engineering and Employers Association of SA.

Finally, I thank the Prime Minister of Australia, John Howard, and the federal government for their vote of confidence in South Australia, because South Australia is the winner today. The Prime Minister understood that our bid better met the national interest in providing the capability to build this new strategic industry. The Prime Minister, as the guardian of the national interest, knew well and understood the transformational impact on regional economy of a project such as this. That was my pitch to him when I went to Canberra with Robert de Crespigny—the transformational impact that this would have on the South Australian economy. This means thousands of jobs for today's workers and for our children. It means skilled trade jobs, jobs in design, IT, advanced manufacturing and many more opportunities for our small and medium enterprises.

This has been a truly united effort of South Australian business, South Australian workers and the entire South Australian community. It is a tribute to the work of all those dedicated South Australians who, once again, have shown that when we put our minds to it, when we are united in a common cause, we can overcome any opposition. When South Australians are united behind a cause or a project, no-one can stop us and no-one can beat us. All South Australians are the winner today. Now, today, after 2½ years of campaigning, it is full speed ahead for South Australia.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Treasurer (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

Regulations under the following Acts—

Land Tax—Fees

Petroleum Products Regulation—Fees

By the Minister for Police (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

Regulations under the following Act—

Firearms—Fees

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

Third Party Premiums Committee Determination March 2005—Statement of Reasons

Regulations under the following Acts—

Harbours and Navigation—Fees

Motor Vehicles—

Fees

Miscellaneous Fees

Passenger Transport—Fees

Road Traffic—

Fees

Miscellaneous Fees

Prescribed Circumstances

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Associations Incorporation—Fees
- Bills of Sale—Fees
- Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration—Fees
- Business Names—Fees
- Community Titles—Fees
- Co-operatives—Fees
- Cremation—Tagging
- Criminal Law (Sentencing)—Fees
- District Court—Fees
- Environment, Resources and Development Court—Fees
- Fees Regulation—
 - Proclaimed Managers and Justices Fees
 - Public Trustee Administration Fees
- Magistrates Court—Fees
- Partnership—Fees
- Public Trustee—Fees
- Real Property—
 - Fees
 - Land Division Fees
- Registration of Deeds—Fees
- Security and Investigation Agents—Fees
- Sexual Reassignment—Fees
- Sheriff's—Fees
- Strata Titles—Fees
- Summary Offences—Fees
- Supreme Court—Fees
- Worker's Liens—Fees
- Youth Court—Fees

Rules of Court—

- Magistrates Court—Enforcement Process

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Controlled Substances—
 - Pesticides Fees
 - Poisons Fees
- Public and Environmental Health—Fees
- South Australian Health Commission—Fees
- Private Hospitals Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium—Fees
- Crown Lands—Fees
- Environment Protection—
 - Beverage Container Fees
 - Fees
- Heritage—Fees
- Historic Shipwrecks—Fees
- National Parks and Wildlife—
 - Fees
 - Hunting Fees
- Native Vegetation—Fees
- Pastoral Land Management and Conservation—Fees
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—Fees
- Radiation Protection and Control—Fees

By the Minister for Administrative Services (Hon. M.J. Wright)—

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Fees Regulation—Water and Sewerage Fees
- Freedom of Information—Fees
- Roads (Opening and Closing)—Fees
- Sewerage—Fees
- State Records—Fees
- Valuation of Land—
 - Fees
 - Valuation Roll Fees
- Waterworks—Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Dangerous Substances—Fees

- Employment Agents Registration—Fees
- Explosives—Fees
- Explosives—Fireworks Fees
- Fair Work—Fees
- Fees Regulation—Fees
- Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare—Fees
- Prescription of Fee

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Authorised Betting Operations—Fees
- Gaming Machines—Fees
- Lottery and Gaming—Fees

By the Minister for Education and Children's Services (Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith)—

Architects Board of South Australian—Report 2004

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Development—Fees
- Mines and Works Inspection—Fees
- Mining—Fees
- Opal Mining—Fees
- Petroleum—Fees

By the Minister for Families and Communities (Hon. J.W. Weatherill)—

Regulations under the following Act—

- Adoption—Fees

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

Regulations under the following Act—

- Housing Improvement—Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Livestock—Fees
- Meat Hygiene—Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Local Government—Fees
- Private Parking Areas—Fees

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

Regulations under the following Acts—

- Building Work Contractors—Fees
- Conveyancers—Fees
- Land Agents Variation Regulations—Fees
- Liquor Licensing—Fees
- Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Electricians—Fees
- Second-Hand Vehicle Dealers—Fees
- Trade Measurement Administration—Fees
- Travel Agents—Fees.

QUESTION TIME

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Can I first thank the federal government very much and congratulate everyone who has been involved in the bid, including the work force down at ASC—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: How about the government? Congratulate the government.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: And the government—everyone involved in the bid.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: And the Premier—

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes—

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Go on: say 'Good work, Mike.'

The Hon. R.G. KERIN:—and the Premier. And the many others—even the deputy, the Treasurer. My question is to the Attorney-General. Did the Director of Public Prosecutions, Stephen Pallaras, tell the Attorney-General that the Treasurer had threatened the current or future funding of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions? Yesterday the Treasurer in his ministerial statement said:

... 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.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I meet Mr Pallaras fortnightly and, because the house was sitting, I met him at Parliament House, and he relayed to me a conversation he had had with the Treasurer. An interpretation here taken from the Treasurer's words was that an increase for the office of the DPP commensurate with the increase for the police would result in a cut for the office of the DPP—at least, a lesser increase in funding. So, Mr Pallaras interpreted this as meaning that, if he persisted in public criticism, there was a possibility that his funds would be cut in subsequent budgets.

The Treasurer has assured me, in writing, that that is not so. I certainly accept the Treasurer's assurance. The funding for the Office of the DPP has gone only one way since the Labor government has been in office, and that is up—up and up and up—and it will continue to go up as much as anything because both this government and the previous government gave the Office of the DPP a lot more work. For instance, under the previous government, to the Liberal Party's credit, we dispensed with the idea of just plain break-ins and introduced the idea of home invasions as a—

Mr Meier interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Well, it has a lot to do with it. If the member for Goyder has any understanding of the pressure under which prosecutors work at the Office of the DPP—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is a point of order. The member for Goyder.

Mr MEIER: Mr Speaker, my point of order is: what does this answer have to do with respect to an intimidating phone call?

The SPEAKER: The member for Goyder was interjecting and then seeks the support of the standing orders. The Attorney needs to focus on the question, but I think he is getting to the end of his answer, anyway.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I am getting to the answer. It is true that we have increased funding in real terms to the Office of the DPP during the period that we have been the government: there has been an increase of 43 per cent in real terms to the Office of the DPP. The number of employees has increased from 63 when the Hon. R.G. Kerin left office as Premier to 103 now that we are in office. But—and there is a big qualification on that—the office is still under strain because we have put a lot of work, through our law and order agenda, onto the Office of the DPP by making offences that were hitherto summary offences indictable offences—that is to say, they are no longer prosecuted by police prosecutors but are prosecuted by the Office of the DPP. It was quite in order for police to prosecute break-ins under the old dispensation, but under the new dispensation, which was brought in by the Liberal government, some of those are regarded as home invasions, namely, serious criminal trespass or aggravated serious criminal trespass—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The member for Bragg interjects to the effect that hardly any criminal trespass cases, serious criminal trespass cases or aggravated serious criminal trespass cases have been prosecuted. In fact, there is a welter of them as a result of a law passed by this parliament at the initiative of the Liberal Party. That is why the Office of the DPP is under strain. Because it is under strain, we have to give it the resources it needs, and we are.

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Ms RANKINE (Wright): My question is to the Minister for Health. Given that today is World No Tobacco Day, will the minister inform the house what the government is doing to encourage people to give up smoking?

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I am very pleased to inform the house that more South Australians are butting out cigarettes for good. Smoking rates in this state are now at their lowest ever. The latest statistics from the state's Tobacco Control Research and Evaluation program have just been released. The report's 2004 figures show that 21.9 per cent of adults smoke tobacco products, down from 23.6 per cent in the year before, 2003. Of the 21.9 per cent, 18 per cent are regular daily smokers while the remainder are social smokers, down from 22.1 per cent in 1999. This is the lowest figure on record.

Since 1999, overall smoking prevalence rates have dropped from 25 per cent. We have come a long way since 1981 when 33 per cent of the population were smoking. The results of this report are very encouraging but there is still a lot of work to do. Despite huge reductions in smoking levels in the past 20 years, smoking is still the biggest contributor to ill health and premature death. The Rann Labor government commits almost \$4 million annually to tobacco control and will continue with its strong commitment to reducing the incidence of smoking through strategies to help people stop smoking and discourage others, especially young people, from taking it up in the first place.

A subsidised nicotine replacement therapy trial for 2000 low income smokers has been designed and will begin soon. This \$265 200 program will randomly select members of the public to participate in the trial, and people will be invited to participate via direct mail in the next few weeks. As well as that, today the government has announced an end to the grace period for workplaces, hotels and clubs and individuals to comply with the new smoking bans introduced in South Australia last year. From 30 June, venues and individuals who do not comply with the new laws will be hit with fines. Until now, health department officers have taken an educative and cooperative approach, working with businesses and venues to teach them about the new laws and help them comply.

The level of compliance in the industry and community has been extremely pleasing since the restrictions were introduced last December, and I am confident that that will continue. However, from the end of June, the grace period will come to an end and on-the-spot fines will apply. Fines will vary, depending on the offence, and can be up to \$200 for individuals and \$1 250 for employers and hospitality operators.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Attorney-General. Is it true that the Director

of Public Prosecutions (Mr Pallaras) described the Treasurer's phone call to him as intimidating and an attempt to interfere with his independence?

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

NATURAL RESOURCES, SUSTAINABLE USE

Ms BREUER (Giles): My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. What progress is the government making towards the sustainable use of our natural resources?

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Transport is out of order and he will be warned in a minute.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): Today the chair of the Natural Resources Management Council (Mr Dennis Mutton) and I launched a consultation document for developing the state's first five-year natural resources management plan, called Towards South Australia's State NRM Plan. The plan will set strategic overarching approaches for all natural resource decision-making in South Australia. Once the project is complete, we will have the most integrated management approach in the nation. The comprehensive approach is a result of the passage of the Natural Resources Management Act 2004.

This consultation paper has been produced to give peak bodies, agencies and community members the chance to have their say. Regional workshops and targeted briefings are scheduled to invite the community to contribute to the development of the plan. There are 13 regional workshops planned at locations right across the state. The consultation document also invites submissions by any interested party, and they are due by 26 July this year. Briefing sessions will also be held for members of bodies such as the LGA, the Conservation Council, the Aboriginal Lands and the Farmers Federation. At least 20 other organisations will also be offered briefings.

The paper includes some proposed goals for the plan designed to encourage discussion. These include the improvement of the health of the River Murray; protection and improvement to the productivity capacity of land use for agriculture; protection of coastal environments from development pressures; and the keeping of greenhouse gas production within sustainable limits. The integration of natural resource management is fundamental, because our water, soil, flora and fauna resources cannot be managed in isolation from each other.

I would like to thank Dennis Mutton and all members of the NRM Council for developing the consultation document and for their commitment to working with the community to develop this significant document, which I now table.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Deputy Premier. Given the process of correspondence exchanged between the DPP, the Attorney-General and the Deputy Premier that was already taking place, why did the Treasurer choose to ignore that process and come into the house yesterday and criticise Mr Pallaras in his ministerial statement? The Attorney-General has spoken of his attempts to resolve the issues between the Deputy Premier and the DPP. These are attempts which came to nought after the ministerial statement yesterday.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): The Opposition Leader would be the first to criticise me and the government if we did not bring this matter to the attention of the house at the earliest opportunity. I am now being criticised because I told the parliament what happened. I should have thought that I would be facing criticism had we not said anything. You can just imagine the question from the Leader of the Opposition about this incident if we had not said anything. I was upfront yesterday; I told the house what occurred. I say that enough has been said on the matter from me, and I look forward to assisting the Attorney-General in his endeavours as Attorney-General for a long time to come.

Mr SNELLING (Playford): Can the Premier advise the house on the outcome of his meeting this morning with the Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Stephen Pallaras QC, and his staff?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): It was absolutely terrific. I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the incredibly hard-working staff of the Office of the DPP. These are the people who deal with thousands of cases over many years often under difficult circumstances. I met a whole lot of young staffers today. The Attorney-General joined me, and what I felt from them was their absolute commitment to do a professional job on behalf of the state. I want to take this opportunity to honour their contribution to the state and to the justice system.

I should say, however, that I was very impressed by one young lawyer, Jane Powell, who gave an articulate presentation about the demands of the job. She was followed by an administrative staffer who talked about the stresses of her job and the tremendous hours that they work. Of course, I pointed out that, since the time that we came to government, the DPP staff had grown from 63 to 103, which is a big increase in staff. But it is still quite clear that these officers are working under pressure. It was a good and robust debate.

I cannot imagine any premier from the other side of politics having the guts to go down there and front—not only to listen to what they do, but also to cop a bit of stick in the process—and that is fine, because I am robust enough to take it. I did point out that I stand behind what we did over Nemer, and I stand behind our decision to have a royal commission on McGee. I also will continue to speak out on issues of law and order, because that is our job, and I pointed out how that is what people expect of us in terms of leadership.

I was very impressed with Jane Powell's presentation and the presentation of an administrative officer who talked about the stresses and strains of trying to deal with the public, with victims of crime, with the court system, and with police, and so on. So, I am very pleased to announce to the house today that, following my meeting with the Office of the DPP today, I have made a decision supported by the Treasurer for an extra half a million dollars of funding to support the DPP's office. When I met with Mr Pallaras afterwards I said that I hoped he would tell the administrative staffers and the young staffer that they had persuaded me to put in extra resources.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will address the chair, and then they will be able to hear more easily what the chair has to say. The leader.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Was the Attorney-General aware of the Deputy Premier's intent to attack the DPP yesterday and, if so, why did the Attorney-General fail to ask the

Treasurer to not make his ministerial statement and, therefore, protect the DPP from unfair and damaging criticism?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): This is just a repetition of a question that I was asked yesterday. In any cabinet scheme, the Attorney-General has a special position, a special responsibility for the criminal justice system and for the independence of the judges and the Office of the DPP. I was aware that the Treasurer was giving a ministerial statement; I was not aware of its content.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: If the Attorney-General had been aware of what was in it, would he have asked the Deputy Premier not to make the statement?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It is a hypothetical question. I call the member for Taylor.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Do you want me to answer the question?

The SPEAKER: Order! It is a hypothetical question. It is out of order. I call the member for Taylor.

Members interjecting:

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

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Davenport has been warned—and the member for Mawson.

ADULT CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE HELPLINE

Ms WHITE (Taylor): My question is to the Minister for Families and Communities. What are the most recent usage figures from the Adult Childhood Sexual Abuse Helpline established in July 2004?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I thank the honourable member for her question. The Adult Childhood Sexual Abuse Helpline, otherwise known as Respond SA, is a service provided through Relationships Australia, a non-government secular organisation that has a 50-year history serving the South Australian community. Consistent with the previous strong support that it has been providing to this section of the South Australian community, the data presented to me as at May 2005 was as follows:

- 857 callers have phoned the Respond SA helpline;
- 78 per cent of those callers were survivors of childhood sexual abuse;
- 12 per cent of those callers were partners, parents, or significant others of people who had been subjected to childhood sexual abuse;
- 2 per cent of the callers identified as being indigenous;
- 49 per cent of the callers to the helpline have booked counselling appointments; and
- 123 reports of childhood sexual abuse have been made to the SA Police Sexual Crimes Investigation Branch since the inception of this service.

Respond SA counselling services are available in six Relationships Australia suburban locations, and outreach services from the city location have been extended to the Northern Women's Community Health Service, the Gawler Community Health Centre, the Dale Street Women's Health Centre, the Playford Community Health Centre, the Noarlunga Health Village, the Adelaide Remand Centre and, from May 2005, to the Mount Gambier Prison. An evaluation of this growing program has now been completed.

This service adds to the substantial array of services that the government has put in place for the adult survivors of

childhood sexual abuse. It is a broader service offering than the inquiry into the abuse of children in state care, and it is provided to all adult survivors and complements the existing services available in our health-care system. We know that for many years a certain censorship has fallen on these issues, and this has meant that many people have not come forward, not wanting to admit to either themselves or to others that abuse has occurred in their past. However, often, as a very important part of the healing process, it is necessary for them to confront these issues and, for many South Australians, it has an ongoing effect on their health and wellbeing.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Attorney-General table all minutes, memos, file notes and correspondence between the Attorney-General and the Treasurer, and between the Attorney-General and the Director of Public Prosecutions, in relation to the public stoush between the Treasurer and the Director of Public Prosecutions? On ABC Radio this morning, the Attorney-General said that he sent a memo to the Treasurer and also that the Director of Public Prosecutions had a file note of the conversation.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): It is my bounden duty so to do. Yes.

MARION LEARNING FESTIVAL

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What is being done to showcase community learning activities in the southern suburbs?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): Last week, I had the honour of launching the Marion Learning Festival 2005 at the Westfield Shopping Centre. The festival is a community event that promotes learning through a series of displays, interactive events and presentations. It was quite interesting to see that shoppers stopped to sit down and watch the proceedings, particularly those involving young people both on stage and talking about their views in regard to education.

Many recreation and arts events support the learning festival, and people of all ages are encouraged to participate; that was certainly reflected in the interest of the audience and those taking part in the exhibitions and events. Part of the focus is on developing life skills, ensuring that people look also at enriching their life, particularly by pursuing hobbies, as well as those involving more traditional academic or vocational studies. A diverse range of local organisations participated in the festival, including activities such as computing, cooking, fire safety, karate, sport and science.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the winners of the Marion Teaching and Learning Awards, which recognise the achievements of people who have improved their life and teachers and organisations that have made a significant contribution to the Marion community through innovative teaching. In particular, I mention:

- Darryl Tiggerman, who was the winner of the Student Achievement Award for Individual Learning;
- the Ascot Park Primary School, which was recognised for its cross-generational craft and computer skill program;
- Veronica Bowman from the Marion City Band, who received the Volunteer Tutor Award; and

Cathy Wiseman, who won the Vocational Training or Workplace Trainer Award.

In addition, the Vocational Training or Workplace Employer Award went to Hamilton Secondary College, and I think we all know about the fine work done there.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Attorney-General. Given the moving feast which is the DPP's funding, will the Attorney-General advise the house of the real figures for the funding of the DPP's Office for 2004-05? The Attorney-General told the house last Thursday that funding for the DPP's Office for 2004-05 was \$10.591 million. The budget documents for 2004-05 disagree with the Attorney and show a figure of \$11.081 million, a discrepancy of \$500 000.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I will get a detailed answer for the Leader of the Opposition about that matter. The leader has difficulty adding up the increase in funding to the DPP's Office because, yesterday, he told the house wrongly that the increase in funding to the DPP's Office was only \$300 000, and he kept insisting on it.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The leader is out of order.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The truth of the matter, of course, is that the increase in funding for the Office of the DPP was \$1.2 million. What the Leader of the Opposition conveniently ignored was that we had accepted the Office of the DPP's bid to be funded for the pre-1 December 1982 sex offence cases, which involved sexual offending against children before December 1982, prosecutions which the Hon. Robert Lawson opposed bringing.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. What the minister is now saying is pure debate and bears no relationship to the question at all.

The SPEAKER: Order! The questions and answers are getting somewhat repetitive. I ask the Attorney to wind up his answer.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: In calculating the increase in funding for the DPP, the leader ignored that the increase was \$1.2 million—

The Hon. R.G. Kerin: Over four years.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: No, not over four years; it was \$1.2 million recurrent in the 2005-06 financial year. That was the true increase, and it was made up of three components, the first of which was an untied component of \$300 000; the second component was an increase for the historic sex offence matters; and the third component was an increase to enable the Office of the DPP to carry out the new Criminal Assets Confiscation Act, which we have introduced to try to improve the ability of the DPP's Office to confiscate the proceeds of crime and the instruments used in crime.

I note that the usual Liberal Party head office bank of phonecallers to talkback radio (including Liberal Fred of Elizabeth) was deploring the introduction of the Criminal Assets Confiscation Act and the reduction in the burden of proof for the confiscation of assets of crime from beyond reasonable doubt to the balance of probabilities.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Will the Attorney-General tell the house what the real figures are for the funding of the DPP's Office for 2005-06 (the next financial year)? Last Thursday, the Attorney-General told the house that the DPP's budget for 2005-06 was going to be \$11.45 million, a figure

which is actually consistent with budget paper 3 and the government's press release last week which spoke of an extra \$300 000. However, budget paper 4, for some reason, has a figure of \$12.9 million, which the Attorney-General again contradicted in his last answer.

The SPEAKER: I remind members that we will soon have the pleasure of estimates committees, when this sort of question would probably be more appropriately asked.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I am certain that we will be able to give the Leader of the Opposition a satisfactory answer on reflection to what he sees as discrepancies. I am sure that they can be explained, but I can tell him today—and he is a bit miserable about it—that we have increased funding to the Office of the DPP by another \$500 000.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The house will come to order. Order, the members for Schubert and MacKillop!

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Davenport has been advised many times not to interject. Next time he will be named. The Minister for Transport also will not interject.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Why is it that when I interject I get warned, but when the government interjects nothing happens?

The SPEAKER: At the time that the chair was focusing on the member for Davenport, I understand that the Minister for Transport used that opportunity to slip in an inappropriate interjection. He will be warned. I call the member for Unley.

CHILD ABUSE

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

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

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): My question is to the Attorney-General. Is he incompetent and reckless in upholding statute law or is he just unsympathetic to the needs of child victims of sexual abuse in South Australia? On a number of occasions in this house, and publicly, the matter of the missing assets of convicted paedophile Peter Liddy has been summarily dismissed by the Attorney-General. On one occasion he is reported in *Hansard* as saying:

This matter is now closed. Notwithstanding this, Today Tonight, initially, and the SAPD, subsequently, have now recovered a substantial quantity of valuable assets.

There is increasing evidence that some legal practitioners for whom the Attorney-General is responsible to this house may have seriously failed in their professional obligations to the court and may have breached criminal law in a similar fashion such that it has resulted in one person associated with the case being charged last week.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): One week we have the opposition railing at me across the chamber about the separation of powers and the government's alleged violation of it, and today we hear from the member for Unley that I am responsible for each and every legal practitioner in South Australia and that I am to blame if the legal practitioner has misconducted himself about the Liddy assets.

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, my question was specifically on the statement, which the Attorney made to this house and for which he is responsible to this house, that the matter is now closed.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: On the question of Peter Liddy's assets, of course, they are important because, if any substantial assets of Mr Liddy can be found, they can be used to pay compensation to the victims of his crimes. So, like the member for Unley, I am pleased when assets of Mr Liddy are found because they can be used for that purpose. I asked the then Solicitor-General, the late Brad Selway, to look at this matter, and he advised me on the matter after having a meeting with Channel 7 and discussing just these matters. The advice that was given to me, in essence, was that Mr Liddy had expended nearly all, if not all, his assets on legal representation in his defence. From that point, Channel 7 has set out to prove that there are other assets of Liddy which the police and others have sought to find but have been unable to find. It is quite understandable that Channel 7, on its own account, after spending several years and several hundreds of thousands of dollars, has managed to track down some—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: No, what the police and the authorities could not do.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley has asked his question.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: It is not normally the function of the Attorney-General of the state to go looking for assets in order to satisfy a judgment in a civil claim. Not even Graham Archer believes that that is the function of the Attorney-General of the state. I took advice from the Solicitor-General and my department. I reported to the house that Liddy's assets had, so far as we can tell, been dissipated in funding his legal defence. If someone has brought to light some of Mr Liddy's assets that can now be used to satisfy judgments that may be obtained against him by his victims, that is splendid and I congratulate all who participated in it. But it is not normally, or ever, I think, the function of an Attorney-General for South Australia personally to go out as a detective and find assets to satisfy a civil judgment. No-one really believes that.

Mr BRINDAL: I have a supplementary question, sir. My question is to the Attorney. Is it the responsibility of the Attorney-General of South Australia to be responsible to this house and the people of South Australia where professionals sworn to uphold the dignity of the court and officers of the court violate their duty and commit crimes in the name and on behalf of the courts in South Australia?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I received a message last Thursday evening, I think, that a lawyer who works for the Legal Services Commission at Port Adelaide and who—

An honourable member: That's still an employee of the state.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:—I will come to that—did a bit of work on the side as a valuer had been charged with theft. I understand that charge of theft relates to Mr Liddy's assets. I am not quite sure how I as Attorney-General could have prevented a person who happens to be a lawyer committing a criminal act, namely, theft. The matter is now before the courts. The member for Unley speaks as though the matter has been resolved beyond reasonable doubt. It has not.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: He says it will be. I am glad that he is so confident. Indeed, why do we not just take this

charge of theft and have it decided before Mr Justice Brindal rather than the courts?

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The Leader of the Opposition interjected, 'If there are any other lawyers in the state.' The member for Unley says that the government has been terribly negligent in ensuring that all the 3 000 lawyers with practising certificates in this state are not doing naughty things, and it is my fault that one of them may have committed a theft. The Leader of the Opposition says that I am being so mean to them that they are packing up and practising on the eastern seaboard.

URANIUM

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): My question is to the Premier. Does Labor's new found uranium position have the support of all its members? The member for Florey has a 'No uranium' mining sticker displayed on her mobile electorate office.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is not a matter for which the Premier is responsible. But if he wishes to—

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I have a great deal of admiration for my good friend the member for Florey. I do not like uranium, either; that is why I want to dig it up and get it out.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Stuart has been here long enough to know the standing orders. The member for Bragg.

SCHOOLS, REPORTS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Given that the minister has refused to provide copies of the school fees and absenteeism reports prepared this year, will she provide a copy of the SACE report that was due in March, and, if so, when?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I am not sure what the member for Bragg is referring to but, certainly, any material that should be tabled is tabled, and the data on the latest attendance figures I do not think has been received in my office—I certainly have not read it yet.

In relation to the SACE review, I understand the final report is in its final editing stage. It will be supplied to me shortly and then will go to cabinet. When cabinet has responded, it will be released.

SUICIDES

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): My question is to the Minister for Families and Communities. How many suicides have been reported in Adelaide's supported residential care facilities over the past 12 months; and what action has he taken to reduce the incidence of the suicides? The department has confirmed that there have been at least three suicides of residents in supported residential care facilities this year and there may have been several others over the past 10 months. Concerns have been raised that the suicides may be attributed to lack of support and supervision regarding medication. The former head of mental health, Jonathan Phillips, said that

without adequate services SRF residents can become, and I quote, 'isolated, leading to severe depression, and, in some cases, suicidal'.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I thank the honourable member for her question and point out that the three suicides she refers to are, in fact, matters that I have been asked to be investigated, and I will provide a more detailed answer to the house. However, can I say broadly that it has been acknowledged by this government that the SRF sector has needed additional support. That is why we put in place a \$57 million package of support for this sector. It has involved a very detailed analysis of the needs of all of the residents in our SRF facilities across the state. It is a very large exercise of auditing their needs. Many of them are now provided with packages of support that address their particular needs. Some of those needs are mental health care needs, and those people receive appropriate support. Sadly, of course, it is the case that some residents have such a level of mental illness that it does lead to suicide, but I will provide a detailed answer to the extent that I can about those three cases.

But, can I say this, and I know the Minister for Health will back this up: over the eight years of the previous government we saw an abject neglect of mental health care services and supported accommodation services in this state. In fact, until this most recent budget, there was not even a stream within disability services that provided attendant care for people with psychiatric disabilities, wherever they exist—whether in the SRF sector, at home or within the Housing Trust.

The Hon. Dean Brown interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I hear the faint echo of the fluttering heart of the member for Finnis.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I have a point of order, Mr Speaker. The minister is clearly debating the issue, which he is not allowed to do under standing order number 98, let alone mislead the parliament.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I, too, have a point of order, Mr Speaker. I think someone who has been around for as long as the member for Finnis knows that you cannot accuse a person of misleading the parliament in that way.

The SPEAKER: You certainly cannot, except by way of substantive motion, and I think the minister can round up his answer.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sir, I will. I am very proud to stand here and say that the Minister for Health and I developed the first comprehensive response to turning around and retooling our system of mental health services and supported accommodation that we have seen in this state. There have been three generations of reform in the mental health care sector, all of which passed by the previous government. This government is now grappling with the parlous state of mental health care services in this state and made a very substantial contribution in the last budget; and there is more to come if another Labor government is re-elected.

UNIVERSITIES, STATE GRANTS

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What is the amount per annum of state government grants to South Australia's three local universities? The government announced last week that it was giving \$20 million to US-based university Carnegie Mellon. In relation to the grants, UniSA's Vice-Chancellor, Denise Bradley said:

We have had some small assistance from the state government, but nothing of the scale of \$20 million. . . I welcome competition, but Carnegie Mellon have got a bit of a leg up, haven't they?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I saw the article by Gavin Moody of Griffith University. I am not quite sure where Griffith University stands in the first 500 universities in the world. I do not think it actually makes the list, from memory. We do have a very collaborative relationship with our universities. Members will recall that a couple of years ago—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes, I was on the University of South Australia's council and, indeed, was the minister who introduced and passed the legislation to set up the University of South Australia and spent a year of my life on the negotiations. I remember some of the defensive, parochial comments from people from the other universities about what we were doing, and now we are getting the same thing—interestingly enough, only from the University of South Australia, because Flinders University has come out and strongly backed what we are doing and is actually working on collaborations. Indeed, I am told that, despite what members might have read in *The Australian*, all three universities are likely to be involved in discussions on collaborations. That is a good thing. The fact is that Carnegie Mellon University, according to the US News & World Report's annual index, is rated—

Ms Chapman: It's wrong.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: It's wrong, is it? Alexander Downer is wrong. So is the US News & World Report, which rates it as number one in areas such as robotics and IT management, and very high up in public sector management. Can you not please see that Alexander Downer is right? He is absolutely right. Talk to Brendan Nelson. Brendan Nelson is strongly supporting what I am doing and what Alexander Downer is doing. They are even going to change federal law. I do remember the day when we announced a massive amount of money for the Functional Plant Genomics Centre, which is allied to the University of Adelaide at the Waite.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I remember the cabinet meeting. We were ad idem on support. It was a unanimous decision by every member of cabinet to support the Functional Plant Genomics Centre.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Waite!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Of course, that is one of the three top functional genomics centres in the world.

Mr WILLIAMS: I have a point of order, sir.

The SPEAKER: You are going to take a point of order about the member for Waite interjecting, are you?

Mr WILLIAMS: I am most interested to hear the answer to the question that was asked: how much money is the state government giving to the three existing universities in South Australia?

The SPEAKER: The point of order is relevance.

Mr WILLIAMS: The point of order is under standing order 98: what on earth relevance has this diatribe to the question?

The SPEAKER: That is the point of order. There is no need to make a speech.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The fact is that we put in about \$12 million for the Functional Plant Genomics Centre of the University of Adelaide. Also, I was approached by the University of Adelaide, by James McWha, its outstanding Vice-Chancellor (who spent a large part of his time in New

Zealand), about getting support for an international trade centre at the University of Adelaide.

Mr WILLIAMS: On a point of order, I rise again on the matter of relevance. Are you going to make a ruling, sir, on my point of order? Are you going to make a ruling?

The SPEAKER: I am ruling that the Premier is still within the ambit of the question.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The question was about what financial support we have put into the existing universities, and that is what I am telling you. There was the trade centre, headed by Andy Stohler who, as members opposite would all know as they are so in touch with business, is the former Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organisation based in Geneva. To secure him we as a state put in money to get him down there.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: We fund a chair at the University of South Australia.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: We fund a chair at the University of South Australia. Then, Denise Bradley, my critic on this, came to see us a few years ago about the Hawke Centre which, hopefully, will be built. Construction starts later this year. As for money—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes; there is some more to come. There was \$3 million for the art gallery that Denise Bradley wanted. There is also the grant for the Mawson Institute for Advanced Manufacturing to modify and refurbish an existing building at the University of South Australia's Mawson Lakes Campus. In this budget there is \$2 million in 2005-06; \$2 million in 2006-07; \$2 million in 2007-08; \$2 million—

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I rise on a point of order, sir. I would ask you to rule on whether the document that the Premier is quoting from is actually a document for debate before the house at the moment.

The SPEAKER: It is a budget paper. I think the Premier has answered the question. He needs to wind up the answer.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Thank you sir, I am winding up, but not down. And, there is \$2 million in 2008-09. Also, there is \$2 500 for the Australian Mineral Scientific Research Institute for support to establish the infrastructure facilities at Mawson Lakes. So, we are prepared though our science initiative and an outstanding science minister, who knows more about science than even know I know. We have put in a series of science grants which are also going to our universities.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is clearly debating the answer.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): I have a very important supplementary question. The Premier quoted \$12 million for the Plant Genomics Centre. Is it true that the previous government had actually signed off on that, and that the current government tried to take out of that agreement, but found that our agreement was binding?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Let me tell you. Breaking news! This might just upstage the air warfare destroyers decision, and it might upstage the fact that we are giving extra money to the DPP's office. I remember a telephone call from the former minister of further education, the member for Adelaide, who said to me, 'Mike, we've got to support this.' Robert De Crespigny was on the phone. I spoke to the Treasurer, and they got the money.

The SPEAKER: The Premier will not talk over the chair, or he will be named. The Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: My point of order is that the Premier was debating the matter. I was only asking for a direct answer as to whether they tried to duck out of the Plant Genomics Centre.

The SPEAKER: The question was hardly a supplementary. It basically raised new information. The member for West Torrens.

ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Can the minister inform the house what the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission is doing to understand the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities throughout South Australia?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Multicultural Affairs): The April meeting of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission was held in the City of West Torrens, and the May meeting was held in the regional town of Berri, and was represented, of course, by a member who was part of the national Labor coalition government. After each meeting, a community consultation session was held. As you would appreciate, sir, West Torrens has many long settled Australians who migrated from Greece and Italy.

Much of the conversation during the evening focused on the government's ability to provide grants to community organisations. During the consultation, information was provided that either explained the guidelines and application processes for the South Australian Multicultural Grants Scheme, or provided contact details for other grants schemes available within government, such as the Premier's Community Initiative Fund and seniors grants. Of course, I am sure that the member for Morialta would have noticed the massive increase in funding available to the Multicultural Grants Scheme. And it will be spent wisely. The South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission held its last meeting at Berri, and that is because Labor is a party for regional South Australia now that we are in coalition with the National Party.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the members for Goyder and MacKillop!

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Unlike the meeting at West Torrens, the people in Berri did not mention the need for grants.

Mr BRINDAL: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think that the Attorney-General has either seriously misled this house or misrepresented the position of our national coalition partners, and I ask you to clarify the matter, or for the Attorney-General to withdraw.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! It is not a point of order. It is up to the Attorney-General to explain what he meant by that: it is not up to the chair to tell him what to say.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: What I meant by it is that we have the honour to have the member for Chaffey as a minister in our government. The Berri meeting was attended by members of many small ethnic communities including Afghanis, Sikhs, Greeks, Italians and Turks, and many service providers in the region. Matters discussed included the need for jobs and lodging for recent arrivals. Those working in employment and training services took the opportunity to explain their services to the meeting, and a

local member of the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, Mr Peter Ppiros, who is also the Chair of the Riverland Multicultural Forum, said that the forum would coordinate the exchange of information between all the local groups, assisting recent arrivals to settle.

As well as these matters, the meeting was also told of situations where there is a lack of service because of the small number of qualified interpreters, and of the difficulties that aged members of ethnic communities are facing in the Riverland. The South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission intends to discuss with relevant agencies in Adelaide the matters of lodgings and aged care provision raised at the Riverland meeting. It will also discuss with some agencies the need to provide interpreters and translators to ensure that members of ethnic communities are well served.

In conclusion, I know that most members opposite will agree that we all appreciate the work of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission under the stewardship of its chairman, John Kiosoglous, and its Deputy Chair, Hieu Van Le (who I feel certain is destined for higher office) and will congratulate it on ensuring that ethnic communities from around South Australia are heard and action is taken to help them.

MURRAY RIVER

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Why has the Minister for the River Murray only just replied to the question that I asked in the estimates committee last year about progress on River Murray initiatives? On 23 June last year, I asked about progress on implementation of the recommendations of the Select Committee on the River Murray. Under cover of a letter dated 17 May 2005, the minister provided a document dated February 2003, detailing such up-to-date initiatives as the River Murray Bill, which was passed by the parliament in 2003.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Minister for the River Murray): I thank the member for Mitchell for his question.

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

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: Firstly, I would like to point out that—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister will resume her seat until the house comes to order because there is no point—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for the River Murray has the call.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: I thank the member for Mitchell for his question. On 23—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not know whether or not members want an answer. The minister can have another attempt and, if that fails, we will call question time to an end.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD: Thank you, sir. I thank the member for Mitchell for the question, because it is not good enough to have that length of time pass before questions are answered. I will ensure, in my position as Minister for the River Murray, that it will not happen in the future. On 23 June I was not the minister who took that question so, when it was brought to my attention that this question remained outstanding, I dealt with it in the most expeditious manner.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): Today, I bring to the attention of the house an issue that has been concerning me increasingly since I have been in this position—that is, the degree of information to which we are all now subjected—and I do so on the basis that, over many years, I have had jobs that involved my reading vast amounts of information. I found that much of the time I could scan papers, make a mental note of the contents of an item and put them somewhere for later reference, should I need it. However, that became no longer viable, as I simply ended up with vast amounts of material to which I never did refer and even the storage of which became a problem.

Recently, I found some comfort in two ways. First, The former director of mental health services in South Australia, Dr Jonathon Phillips, spoke at a local mental health forum, which I had the privilege to chair. In his opening remarks, he mentioned the increasing dilemma of our modern culture and society, namely, the malaise amongst everybody subjected to this level of information overload. Secondly, I came upon an article, written and published at the beginning of 2002 (so, it is indeed more than three years old), in the current *Law Society Bulletin* but republished from an article in the Oregon Attorney Assistance Program. It pointed out a few interesting facts, one of which was that *The New York Times*, which is published daily, contains more information than the average person in the 17th century would have encountered in their entire lifetime.

The article also pointed out that, at that time, every day the average American saw 16 000 ads, logos and labels. I thought that was probably so because, as we drive to work, we pass numerous advertisements on bus stops, etc. We read them in newspapers and we are confronted by 16 000 of them every day. The article, published about three years ago, also suggested that, every day, the average executive was already sending and receiving over 300 pieces information. In my very junior years, I remember talking to practitioners (elderly practitioners, admittedly) who reflected on days when they might have run 10 to 30 files at a time. Yet, three years ago, we were already processing over 300 pieces of information daily.

The article also stated that most humans cannot take in more than seven items (plus or minus two) in their short-term memory. Humans are generally designed with a fairly good long-term memory, but they do not have much short-term capacity. This means that most of us can remember a seven-digit number, but not much more, although we have got used to eight digits, as we add the relevant area code to a telephone number, for example; however, most of us cannot remember very much. So, we now have the increasing problem of sorting what is relevant from what is irrelevant in our life. It is no longer any good deciding that we will put something aside to refer to later. In fact, the recommendation made in the article was that one has to read the information and then put it into the wastepaper bin straightaway, rather than trying to store it for later reference.

The article suggests that information at an international level is increasing at such an overwhelming rate that about 2 000 books are published every day, and it estimates that the total of all printed knowledge is doubling every five years.

Not long ago, people, if they were very learned, could read everything that was printed. This is now an impossibility, and we have a real dilemma. I suggest that this is an area of study to which we need to pay some attention, because—

Ms Chapman: Close down the net.

Ms REDMOND: The member for Bragg suggests closing down the internet. I, for one, would vote for that. In my personal world, I live without computers, and I would happily see a reversal of the current technology, because people are becoming stressed by it. There are studies that indicate that the level of stress is increasing. This is what Dr Jonathon Phillips was referring to at this mental health forum. He believes that it is having an impact on our mental health. There are studies that show that it is even having an impact on our physical well being. We are being buried alive in information which is not relevant, which is not useful, and which will do us no good.

Time expired.

SORRY DAY

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): Before I speak today I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which parliament meets: the Kurna people. Sorry Day was observed last Friday. It reminds us all of the importance of indigenous culture and the struggle that continues to this day to ensure that the needs of indigenous people are met. In so many areas, indigenous people are over-represented as disadvantaged. While it is important to recognise their contribution in so many ways—in war, in understanding the ecology, flora and fauna of this land, and of course in sport—we should also mention their indefatigable willingness to continue to work within white bureaucracies.

Our Governor-General, Major-General Michael Jeffery, launched National Reconciliation Week in Canberra with a speech highlighting the need for greater understanding and awareness. He renewed the call for the introduction of a uniform indigenous education program to teach young Australians about Aboriginal culture and traditions, saying that there was still far more to learn from at least 60 000 years of continuous occupation of this land—making Aboriginal Australians the oldest living culture in the world.

The flying of indigenous flags on a regular basis and dual language on signs in the city precinct are just two of the ways the Adelaide City Council shows its support. In this place we have had traditional welcomes at the beginning of the parliamentary year on at least two occasions. This is a milestone. Much needed and long overdue attention to the lands in the Far North has begun and, whilst this is welcome, it has become apparent to me through too many examples (such as the abolition of ATSIC) that change is too slowly trickling down from the authorities. Indigenous people tell me that they want the opportunity for self-determination, that they need resources to make their remedies and solutions to their problems work.

Health issues are a case in point. Too few indigenous people become health workers. This contributes in large part to the appalling outcomes for indigenous people: a life expectancy 20 years below that of non-indigenous people, and indigenous adults will rarely access their superannuation. Laws to address this should be considered as this lag in demonstrable improvement will not see those people lucky enough to have jobs that include super benefits living to claim them. Reluctance to access health services, together with the tyranny of distance, means that anything that can be done

must be done—and that goes for making sure that indigenous students are given every assistance to complete year 12 and to go on to tertiary study.

A record 92 indigenous students completed SACE last year, 31 more than the year before. We wish them well in their chosen paths. I should mention here the Reconciliation Ball to be held this Saturday to recognise the outstanding results of the students at Salisbury High School under their inspiring Principal, Helen Paphitis, and her dedicated staff. These students are the hope of the future, and it is important to remember the pressure they face in their responsibilities to their families and the wider indigenous community.

Getting back to health issues, South Australia's pioneering indigenous nurses were honoured at the Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards on the weekend of 15 May. I refer to the article by Brad Crouch in *The Advertiser* at around that time. Seven women (Linda Jackson, Lowitja O'Donoghue, Grace Sopar, Muriel Olsson, Faith Thomas, Margaret Lawrie, and the late Nellie Nihill) overcame the racial barriers of the 1950s to become nurses at a time when their sisters were only usually employed as domestics. Their work was at the forefront of breaking through barriers, some of which unfortunately still exist today. We are grateful for their contributions, particularly those of Professor O'Donoghue, who has recently completed a contract advising the Premier on the APY lands. Reverend Tim Costello worked on that report too, and I am sure their recommendations will make a significant difference once they are adopted.

One area of particular interest to me is the child birth rate and health outcomes for indigenous babies. AMA President, Dr Bill Glasson, recently launched the fourth report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health entitled 'Lifting the Weight'. Premature birth rates and low birth weights are often problems which can be rectified with proper funding, resources and education through access to culturally appropriate services in early pregnancy. Major causes for low birth weight are smoking, alcohol and substance abuse, STDs and malnutrition in the mother. That malnutrition could still be a problem in the 21st century is a damning situation.

As Dr Glasson said, 'Pregnant breast-feeding women should be screened for malnutrition and given access to healthy meals where necessary.' Such a service is delivered in Far North Queensland. Now five years old, it is proof that well targeted and funded measures get positive results. If we do nothing else, we must make sure such programs are introduced here for both urban and remote indigenous mothers so that there is a better future for the next generations of indigenous people. The AMA calculates that 1 140 babies would benefit from changes if introduced immediately. Delay of any kind, therefore, will have a lifelong impact.

We know there is much to be done in adult health measures in areas such as diabetes and renal disease. In this special week, let us make a commitment not to let another year pass without implementing changes. The recently announced state budget will be examined in detail in the next few weeks, and I look forward to highlighting programs that will start that process of change. It is beholden on us all here that we do not have to say sorry for further delays next year, rather that we can say we have worked in harmony to ensure real improvements are part of future reports on the journey of healing we are on together.

SPEECH PATHOLOGISTS

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): Every South Australian is aware of the critical breakdown of our health system

under this Labor government as hospital waiting lists blowout to unmanageable proportions. Every member of this house has their own horror story within their electorate, and no member can claim to be immune from this government's irresponsible mismanagement. Waiting times of five years or more to have a knee or hip replacement defies belief in what is supposed to be a modern progressive society. However, we need to be aware that there are other less noticeable casualties of this government's penny-pinching attitudes. South Australia is suffering from a shortage of speech pathologists, which is having a severe impact on many preschool-aged children who require such services to develop normal language skills. Within the Northern Metropolitan Community Health Service alone, there are some 70 children under three years of age who are currently waiting for speech pathology services.

I shudder to think how many children across South Australia are being denied access to what is a very vital service. These children need help before they enter the education system, and something must be done immediately, because speech pathology is not a one-hit cure. It is a specialised service, from which it takes considerable time and effort to produce any tangible benefits. Speech pathologists can earn more money in private practice, and coupled with a shortage of trained speech pathologists in South Australia it is increasingly difficult to fill available positions. But this in itself is no comfort to the families which desperately require help right now, help for their young children before they enter the education system, and their lack of language skills provides an impediment to learning.

If there is a shortage of speech pathologists this government has a responsibility to fix the problem—no rhetoric, no soapboxes, no excuses. The government made a very loud and a very well-publicised show of recruiting police officers from overseas. So what is the difference in this situation, minister? No media, no money. I have a constituent whose son needs the services of a speech pathologist. This child is almost three and will be in kindergarten next year. Quite appropriately my constituent wants to get her son help now, to try to eliminate trouble further down the track. Her son was assessed at the end of 2003, and has been on a waiting list since the middle of 2004.

This government is the highest taxing government on record and has coffers overflowing with billions of dollars, much of it from its property tax windfall in the face of rising property values and the ongoing GST, which has brought in an excess of dollars, to boost state coffers by hundreds of millions of dollars. Yet it cannot find the funds to offer this small boy, and the 69 others like him, access to specialised services which will have a life-changing effect and enable these future adults to progress through the education system on a level playing field with their peers. Why not? Are there no headlines to be had? That is an absolute disgrace.

I remind members that I am speaking of the children in the northern metropolitan community area. Perhaps members should check to see exactly how many children are in a similar position within their own electorates. The issues I face in my electorate are usually a microcosm of what is happening throughout communities across the state, and I suggest that all members are, in fact, in the same boat. If one considers that the serious shortfall is widespread across South Australia, one realises that literally hundreds of families are in the same precarious position as my constituent. Many of these children live in Labor-held electorates. How can the government say to these people, 'Sorry, I know we are in

power and make the decisions, but we've got to spend lots of money on election advertising and little children can't vote.'

It is not good enough to address the situation in three years or five years. My constituent needs help now, before her child enters the school system and before his speech impediment becomes so entrenched that it is a lifelong problem. My constituent does not want favoured treatment. She does not want to jump the queue or displace other needy children: she simply wants help for her child. That is no less than any parent would want for their child. As equal members of the South Australian community, that is no less than he and she deserve. This government is the highest taxing government in the history of the state. It cannot cry poor, just poor judgment. The Minister for Education and Children's Services (who is sitting in this chamber at the moment) is making a mockery of the very aspect to which I am trying to alert this state, that is, to acknowledge that there are children out there who need help now.

PARLIAMENT, REGIONAL SITTING

Mr CAICA (Colton): I would like to commence today by congratulating the member for Stuart on attaining 35 years in parliament and becoming the longest serving parliamentarian in Australia. Who knows what will happen after the next election? He might lose his seat, I might lose mine: we both might lose or we both might win. However, the fact is that I will always be able to say that I served in parliament with the father of the house. It might be unparliamentary, sir, but I would like to say: well done, Gunnie.

Today I would like to talk about and reflect on the Mount Gambier sitting of this house. I did not have the opportunity to speak in Mount Gambier for a couple of reasons, but I believe I have served my penance: I am repentant and all is now forgiven, and I would like to reflect on Mount Gambier. When I first learnt that we were to sit in Mount Gambier, like a lot of members, I was somewhat sceptical. I supported the idea but, of course, I did not really know how useful it would be or whether it would be positive. So, there was a big question mark over whether or not it would be a worthwhile exercise. However, I think that the Mount Gambier regional sitting was an outstanding success. The population welcomed the parliament down there. The regional sitting was a very positive experience not only for this parliament but also for the people of Mount Gambier. I am sure it was such a positive event that future parliaments will consider it and, in fact, will hold other regional sittings throughout South Australia.

I did not stay at a hotel: I stayed with my friends Rob and Ian Nicholson, who live on Commercial Street East. It is an 11 minute walk from where they live to the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre. It was 12 minutes in the headwind, but it gave me the opportunity to talk to people along the way. I stayed with them, of course, because they are my friends, but it also gave me the opportunity to speak with members of the Mount Gambier community. As members in this house know, I like to talk to people; I like to interact with people; and I enjoy listening to their views. That was the prime reason for my staying at my friends' house.

I met and spoke with many people in Mount Gambier. I met many outstanding people, and I was very pleased to hear their views—from Mrs McKay and her group, who support cancer sufferers in Mount Gambier, through to the local sign-writer, Bob Holla, whom I met whilst I was walking into town and with whom I had a decent chat. None of these

people at that time necessarily knew that I was a member of parliament, just someone who wanted to have a chat. I also spoke to the gentleman who was cleaning the bins in Mount Gambier—and, of course, as we know, Mount Gambier has twice won the national award for being Australia's tidy town, which was in no small part due to the role that he was playing in that town. They were very decent people, one and all.

I also spoke with members of the local darts team who were playing against another South-East team at the Mount Gambier Hotel, and I had a very interesting conversation with staff at Kenneth Aquamarine Products, which exports live crayfish. It was very interesting, and in fact one could spend more than just a single grievance talking about the way in which live crayfish are exported. It is an outstanding contributor to the South Australian economy and involves something in the vicinity, I understand, of about \$60 million, which cannot be sneezed at. Just the process by which they export these crayfish was something that had to be seen to be believed. I spoke with many other people whilst I was in Mount Gambier and, as I said, I thought it was a very worthwhile experience.

One of the highlights for me was the fact that on the Thursday I was able to speak to representatives of the Mount Gambier High School at the East Gambier Football Club (and I have been following the results of East Gambier since I have been back and they are doing quite well). The student representative council met at the East Gambier Football Club, and students had a discussion on their roles and responsibilities as representatives of the SRC. The school students were a credit to their school, teachers and parents and also, most importantly, to themselves.

I could spend a long time talking about the positive effect on me of the visit to Mount Gambier, but we are limited in time. I very much enjoyed it. It was a worthwhile experience and was of value to this parliament and the people of Mount Gambier. I congratulate all those involved with it—not the least being the Hansard staff, PNSG and all other parliamentary staff for the role they played in ensuring that the regional sitting was the success that it was.

PORT LINCOLN DEVELOPMENT

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): The courts and police station in Port Lincoln are about to be redeveloped, something which is necessary and long overdue. But the way Planning SA and the minister have gone about deciding how it will be done demonstrates an indifference to the needs of the local community and the future of Port Lincoln. Planning SA has decided to go ahead with rebuilding the police station and courts on their present site at the corner of Liverpool Street and Adelaide Place. Anyone who has been to Port Lincoln in recent years and had their eyes open will know that this site is the epicentre of the city's parking and traffic problems. Every day, enormous semitrailers loaded with grain, fish, food, cars and goods of all kinds rumble along Liverpool Street, which is the main street and is always busy with pedestrians and other motorists, including many who travel from outlying districts to do their shopping. This accumulation of traffic on narrow roads in this area often results in congestion, a problem which peaks before 9 a.m. and again at 3.30 p.m., when parents are trying to drop off or pick up their children at the nearby primary and junior primary schools, also located on Adelaide Place.

In fact, the Department of Education and Children's Services contracted MMR Consultants to do a report on the

traffic and parking problems associated with the two schools. The consultants found that parking in the area is so restricted that parents often park where they are not allowed to do so, such as in bus zones, and they drive on the footpaths. The report says there is a demand for up to 240 parking spaces, including 90 spaces for staff, and that there is no provision for on-site parking for any staff. The report also found a number of traffic problems which may put children in danger, stating:

Increased development in Port Lincoln will result in increased traffic volumes. It is unlikely that council would consider closing or downgrading Adelaide Place, and the traffic volume on this road would be expected to increase since drivers are likely to use this route to avoid Liverpool Street. Such increases in traffic will exacerbate existing congestion levels during peak periods and result in pedestrians having to cross a greater traffic volume.

This is exactly why the new police and courts complex needs to be moved to a less congested part of town, as I have repeatedly suggested to the minister.

These issues are also detailed in other reports commissioned by the state government, but they have not been properly taken into account by the minister and Planning SA. In his letter to the council announcing approval of the development, the minister's delegate, Simon Howes, merely said that it would provide car parking on the land for staff. But what about all the other people who visit the police station and courts during the course of the day? There is no mention where they will park.

The department of education also contracted Janet Gould & Associates to compile a demographic overview of Port Lincoln. It found that the city and surrounding catchment area were characterised by continued high urban and economic growth and increasing demand for land. The report, which was completed in September 2003, predicted that the city's population would increase from 13 250 in 2001 to only 13 300 in 2006, yet the latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that Port Lincoln already has exceeded the prediction in 2003 with a population of 14 270.

Our parking problems are only going to get worse unless we have some forward thinking, such as relocating at least some of the central schools and relocating the police station and courts to a greenfield site on Porter Street. This a much larger site than the one occupied by the current police station and would enable collocation of the MFS/CFS/SES headquarters and the Child, Youth and Family Services facility in Port Lincoln, all of which also need to be updated. There is enormous demand for commercial sites in the city and the current block could possibly be sold for about \$6 million, which could be used to build the new facility.

The Porter Street site could offer better access for vehicles and the public and more spaces for parking. It is flat, and Porter Street has dual lanes and good traffic flow. This area is part of the city's growing business district and is more centrally located in the town, given that it is close to the enormous Lincoln Cove Marina and adjacent to a roundabout that is the confluence of the city's arterial roads. Building a new facility on a new site would mean that the police and court staff could continue working where they are until it is complete, which would again save money. The larger site would allow for a single storey complex in contrast to the proposed building on the present site, which has to be multistorey and which will incur the additional cost of stairs and lifts. Further savings could be made by collocating the police courts with the CFS, SES—

Time expired.

RECONCILIATION WEEK

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): Today I would like to speak about Reconciliation Week. On Friday I had the pleasure to represent Minister Weatherill at the opening of the event at the Torrens Parade Ground. This was also to celebrate the anniversary of a landmark day in Australian history. It was on this date, 27 May, that the 1967 referendum was passed giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people citizenship status. Thirty-eight years later, it is time for us to think how far we have come as a community and, of course, how far we have yet to travel to become a truly fair and just society for all Australians. That is, in fact, the theme of Reconciliation Week this year, 'Take the next step', which acknowledges that the journey has just begun.

National Reconciliation Week was first held in 1996 to focus public attention on the relationship between Australia's first people—the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders—and the rest of the myriad group that makes up the Australian community. Reconciliation involves justice, recognition and healing. It is about all Australian citizens moving forward with a better understanding of the past and how the past affects the lives of indigenous people. Reconciliation is important because it gives all South Australians the chance to work towards a better future, one in which we can come together to celebrate our cultural diversity and the strong connections that indigenous people have to country, community and family.

There have been a number of events so far during this Reconciliation Month. At the launch, co-patron of the Journey of Healing, Doris Pilkington-Nugli Garimara, reminded people of something. She said that, while Australia is a beautiful country, the removal of Aboriginal children remains a disgrace but, in the spirit of reconciliation, the bitterness of the past should be overcome. The co-patron of Reconciliation SA, Elliott Johnston QC, challenged us to work together in the spirit of reconciliation. He said that we should accept our inherited responsibilities for those past shameful policies and practices that saw children forcibly removed from their families, leading to suffering a sense of loss that still affects them today.

Those challenges should be at the forefront of our minds during this Reconciliation Month, in which we are celebrating with a range of other activities. There is a visual arts exhibition entitled Kumangka Warpulaiadlu, which includes the work of a talented group of Aboriginal artists from within the prison system. That will be on display until the end of this week at the Torrens Parade Ground. It is a celebration of established and emerging indigenous and non-indigenous artists working on reconciliation themes. There is also the Aboriginal Economic Development Seminar and Expo on 3 June, which will bring together the best of Aboriginal enterprises in this state and showcase Aboriginal achievements that all South Australians should be proud of.

I was also able to launch the Register of Cultural Awareness Service Providers, which identifies suitably skilled providers of cultural awareness training, with the aim of making it easy for government departments to select the best training for their needs. There are now nine registered providers on the list, and I was pleased to welcome a number of them who were present on the day. They will help to increase the public sector's understanding of Aboriginal cultures and their ability to engage with Aboriginal communities in appropriate ways. In government, we are also working to increase awareness of indigenous issues through the

Across Government Reconciliation Implementation Reference Committee. It has recently completed its second report to minister Terry Roberts, which is called 'Reconciliation Matters'. There is a continuing commitment to reconciliation in the public sector, which includes encouraging its private sector partners to engage in and celebrate reconciliation.

The committee has coordinated a calendar of events for 2005, which will increase the use and enjoyment of public spaces such as Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga by Aboriginal communities. It has promoted the inclusion of reconciliation in departmental strategic plans and business unit plans, and it has improved the ability of departments to provide enhanced cultural awareness training for public servants. Reconciliation Month is an important time for our community because it reminds us all that there is a challenge ahead, and that challenge is to engage with the reconciliation, to acknowledge its importance to the well-being of Aboriginal people and to recognise the benefits to all who are participating in whatever ways they can. I would like to congratulate everyone involved with the organising of the month's celebrations. In closing, I urge us all to consider the next steps if the nation is to ensure a real improvement in the lives of Aboriginal people. It is up to us to take those steps arm in arm to a stronger future together.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

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

That standing orders be and remain so far suspended as to provide that Government Business has precedence over other motions on Thursday 23 June.

Motion carried.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (RELATIONSHIPS) BILL

Order of the Day, Notices of Motion, No. 2: the Attorney-General to move:

That he have leave to introduce a Bill for Act to amend various Acts to make provision for same sex couples to be treated on an equal basis with opposite sex couples; and for other purposes.

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

That this order of the day be discharged.

Motion carried.

SUPERANNUATION FUNDS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

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

That this bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks to make some important amendments to the governance arrangements for the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia. The corporation, more commonly referred to as Funds SA, has the task of managing superannuation investments of both the state government and the contributors of the public sector superan-

nuation schemes. These investments support the current and future payment of superannuation benefits to a range of public sector employees.

The proposed amendments to the Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia Act 1995 have the effect of:

1. Extending the existing functions of Funds SA about the investment and management of funds to include the investment and management of funds on behalf of such government and related bodies as the Treasurer sees fit.
2. Extending the power of the Governor to remove government nominated directors to the corporations on such grounds as the Treasurer sees fit.
3. Providing the power of direction and control to the Treasurer, but with important limitations prohibiting a direction to Funds SA about an investment decision, dealing with property or the exercise of a voting right. I seek leave to have the remainder of my second reading explanation incorporated into *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Funds SA has developed significant ability in the management of superannuation funds on behalf of the State Government and superannuation beneficiaries.

The opportunity exists to utilise these abilities and related infrastructure to manage and invest funds on behalf of other government and related bodies.

Existing provisions of the *Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia Act* limit the functions of Funds SA to the investment and management of public sector superannuation funds. The term *public sector superannuation funds* is defined in the Act, and generally means the Police Superannuation Fund, the South Australian Superannuation Fund, the Southern State Superannuation Fund, the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund, and contributions made by an employer pursuant to an arrangement under Section 5 of the *Superannuation Act 1988*. The amendments contained in the Bill will remove Funds SA's current limitation to investing the funds of public sector superannuation funds, by allowing for the investment of the funds of such prescribed public authorities as the Treasurer approves. Under the amendments, a public authority that has been declared by regulation to be a prescribed public authority may apply to the Minister for approval to transfer certain of its funds to Funds SA for investment and management of those funds. A definition of *public authority* that will apply for the purposes of the *Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia Act* is to be inserted into the Act as part of the package of amendments. The term *public authority* will mean a government department, a Minister or a statutory authority. The term will also include an eligible superannuation fund that is not a public sector superannuation fund but consists of money contributed by the Crown to provide a group of its employees with superannuation benefits. A regulation made for the purpose of declaring a public authority to be a prescribed public authority will not come into operation before the time for disallowance of the regulation has passed.

Funds SA is governed by a board of directors and the Act provides for at least five board members and at most seven. The board currently has six directors. One board member must be elected by contributors and one must be nominated by the South Australian Superannuation Federation (representing unions and superannuants). The remaining 3 to 5 directors are appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the Treasurer.

The present Act provides capacity for the Minister to request that Funds SA have regard to government policy when preparing its performance plan or performing its functions. Funds SA is only required to have regard to such a request. The section is persuasive but not compelling.

The government has a very significant exposure to the performance of Funds SA and it is the government's view that it is inappropriate for the Treasurer not to have the power or responsibility to effectively oversee the operations of the investment body.

There are circumstances where it is appropriate that the Treasurer have the capacity to direct the Corporation. For example, it is appropriate for the Treasurer to direct the Corporation in relation to employment policy as generally applying in the public sector.

During debate of the original *Superannuation Funds Management Corporation Bill*, the position was put that it was important that the interests of contributors and superannuants be protected by ensuring that the investment decision making of Funds SA be free from direct influence by the government.

Therefore, a key limitation is proposed in relation to the giving of directions by the Treasurer. The amended power of direction and control available to the Treasurer in relation to the performance by Funds SA of its functions requires that a direction not include a direction to Funds SA in relation to investment decisions, dealing with property, or the exercise of a voting right. The Bill also proposes that where a Ministerial direction is given under the proposed new Section 21, the direction must be communicated to Funds SA in writing, included in the annual report of Funds SA, and published in the Gazette within 7 days after the direction is given.

The limitations on the power of direction and control which are continued, protect the interest of superannuants and contributors.

The package of amendments serves to broaden the functions of Funds SA, providing opportunities for a broader range of clients to access the skills and infrastructure of Funds SA, whilst also strengthening the underlying governance arrangements to protect the interest of the government, contributors and superannuants.

I commend the bill to members.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

This clause is formal.

2—Commencement

This clause provides that this Act will be brought into operation by proclamation.

3—Amendment provisions

This clause is formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia Act 1995*

4—Amendment of section 3—Interpretation

This clause inserts into the interpretation section of the *Superannuation Funds Management Corporation of South Australia Act 1995* ("the Act") a number of definitions necessary for the purposes of the measure and removes some provisions that are redundant as a consequence of these amendments.

As the functions of the Corporation are expanded by this measure to include the investment and management of certain funds of public authorities, this clause inserts some definitions that clarify the meaning of terms used in respect of that function. For example, a *public authority* is a government department, a minister or a statutory authority and includes a body or person responsible for the management of an eligible superannuation fund. A *prescribed public authority* is a public authority that has been declared by regulation to be a prescribed public authority. A regulation made for that purpose cannot come into operation until the time for disallowance of the regulation has passed. An *eligible superannuation fund* is a fund that does not fall within the definition of *public sector superannuation fund* but consists of money contributed by the Crown to provide a group of its employees with superannuation benefits.

5—Amendment of section 5—Functions of the corporation

Section 5 of the Act, which describes the functions of the Corporation, is amended by this clause to include reference to the Corporation's new role in respect of investment and management of the funds of public authorities (where the Minister has agreed that those funds should be transferred to the Corporation for such purposes).

6—Insertion of section 5A

This clause inserts a new section into the Act. Section 5A provides that a prescribed public authority may apply to the Minister for approval to transfer funds to the Corporation so that the Corporation can invest and manage the funds on behalf of the authority.

The Minister may refuse an application under this section or may grant an approval for transfer to the Corporation of some or all of the funds referred to in the authority's application. The Corporation is obliged to invest and manage any funds transferred in accordance with the

Minister's approval and must return any funds it holds to the authority on request.

7—Amendment of section 7—Object of the corporation in performing its functions

This clause removes the words "public sector superannuation" from section 7 of the Act so that reference is made in that section to "the funds" (now defined to include nominated funds of approved authorities). This amendment to section 7 is consequential on the expansion of the Corporation's functions and makes clear that the Corporation's objectives apply equally to the funds of approved authorities.

8—Amendment of section 20—Performance plan

The amendments effected by this clause merely clarify that the performance plan required under section 20 relates only to the public sector superannuation funds and not to the nominated funds of an approved authority, which are dealt with in the new section 20A (inserted by clause 9).

9—Insertion of section 20A

This clause inserts a new section. Under section 20, the Corporation is required to prepare a performance plan in each financial year in respect of the investment and management of the public sector superannuation funds. Proposed section 20A is a similar provision, which requires the preparation of a performance plan in relation to the investment and management of the nominated funds of each approved authority. Subsection (2) provides a list of matters that must be included in the plan, including targets for rates of return, strategies, anticipated operating costs and factors that will affect or influence investment and management of the funds.

The Corporation is required to provide the draft plan to the Minister and the relevant approved authority and must have regard to any comments made by the Minister or authority. If the authority requests an amendment to the plan, the Corporation must amend the plan accordingly unless it considers, after consulting with the authority, that the amendment should not be made. If that is the case, the Corporation must provide the authority with written advice as to its reasons for declining to amend the plan in accordance with the request.

10—Substitution of section 21

This clause repeals section 21 of the Act, which requires the Corporation to have regard to government policy when preparing a performance plan or performing its functions if requested to do so by the Minister. A new section is substituted, which provides that the Corporation is subject to the direction and control of the Minister. A direction by the Minister under this section must be in writing. The Corporation must include any direction made by the Minister in its annual report, and the direction must be published in the Gazette within seven days after it is given. A direction by the Minister must not include a direction to the Corporation in relation to an investment decision, dealing with property or the exercise of a voting right.

11—Amendment of section 26—Accounts

Section 26(2) of the Act requires the Corporation to keep proper accounts of receipts and payments in relation to each of the public sector superannuation funds and to prepare separate financial statements in respect of each fund for each financial year. This clause replaces subsection (2) with a new provision that is substantially similar to the existing provision but extends these requirements to the nominated funds of each approved authority.

12—Amendment of section 27—Internal audits and audit committee

13—Amendment of section 28—External audit

The amendments made to sections 27 and 28 by these clauses are consequential on the extension of the Corporation's functions to include investment and management of the funds of public authorities. These amendments simply ensure that the requirements of the Act in respect of internal and external audits apply to all funds invested or managed by the Corporation.

14—Substitution of section 29

This clause repeals section 29, which requires the Corporation to prepare progress reports in relation to

investment and management of the public sector superannuation funds, and substitutes a new section that extends the operation of these requirements to the nominated funds of approved authorities.

15—Amendment of section 30—Annual reports

The amendments to section 30 effected by clause 15 extend the requirements of the Act in respect of provision of annual reports to the funds of approved authorities.

16—Amendment of section 39—Regulations

Section 39(2) of the Act provides that regulations under the Act may prohibit the investment of the public sector superannuation funds in forms of investment prescribed by the regulations unless authorised by the Minister. The first amendment made by this clause extends this power to prohibit certain forms of investment to the funds of approved authorities.

This clause also inserts a new paragraph in subsection (2). This paragraph provides that the regulations may prescribe fees payable in relation to an application under the Act or in relation to anything to be done by the Corporation under the Act.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 30 May. Page 2833.)

The SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens sought leave to continue but he is not here. The member for Bright.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright): As I rise to speak on this Appropriation Bill, I reflect on the fact that this is the sixteenth such bill that has passed through this chamber during my time here—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: And your last.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: And it will be—as the Attorney-General interjects—the last appropriation bill that I am here for, having decided not to contest the state election next year. In doing so, I reflect on the fact that I have also seen some 34 appropriation and supply bills pass through this house during that time. As well as the 16 appropriation bills, there would have been at least 16 supply bills but there were a couple of extras. Mr Speaker, you and the Attorney-General would remember these extras particularly well because, under the Bannon Labor government, there was a need to debate the allocation of further supply, and those debates focused around the bail-out of the State Bank.

It is appropriate during an appropriation debate, particularly when the state has the misfortune to have a Labor government at the Treasury helm, to reflect on the previous maladministration of the former Labor government—a government of which the Attorney-General was part—and reflect also on the fact that, at the end of its appalling period of mismanagement, it left the state with an indebtedness of \$9.4 billion—through the maladministration of a former Labor government. It remains of concern that amongst the members of parliament—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: And you fixed it up.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The Attorney-General interjects, 'And you fixed it up.' The Liberal Party did fix up the mess that was left by the former Labor government through good economic management, through tough decision making and through sound progress. It concerns me that within the ranks of this Labor government we still have some of those who were at the helm at the time of the last Labor disaster, including the Premier, who was a cabinet minister

at the time of the collapse of the bank. Not only was the Premier a cabinet minister but I well recall an amazing motion that the Premier moved in this house condemning the Liberal Party for its attack on Tim Marcus Clark, the then chief executive officer of the bank, and hailing him as, what amounted to, a financial guru.

It is not surprising that the Premier, who demonstrated a total lack of judgment then, continues through his reign as Premier to have a terrible lack of judgment. Within his cabinet is a Deputy Premier who was a senior adviser to the government of the day and the Attorney-General who was also there while the state's finances went into disarray. Those three people still have an integral role in the governance of this state today, and this budget shows that some of their mistakes of the past have not been learned from. I will come back to that point again shortly.

It is fitting that my first speech to the parliament was made from the same microphone from which I make this speech today. I look forward to the very near future, when the Attorney-General decides to retire. We may well see him making his final speeches from the same microphone at which he made his first speech. First, I refer to how we have turned from the \$9 400 million debt, left by the Labor Party to the Liberal government, to where we are today. There was a prime reason why the state's finances were able to be turned around, and a significant part of that reason was beyond the sound economic management of the state's finances and the tough decisions. In fact, a significant part of the state's indebtedness was removed as a direct result of the sale and lease of the assets of the former electricity trust of South Australia. That is an established fact, and one that was noted by Standard and Poor's at the time it gave the state its AAA credit rating.

This government makes much of that rating but has failed to acknowledge up front to the South Australian public that the most significant reason why the state has a AAA credit rating today is as a direct result of the decision to sell and lease the assets of the former electricity trust of South Australia. I emphasise that, had that not occurred, the state would not today have a AAA credit rating.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: So, it is you who put up electricity prices, is it?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The Attorney-General interjects about electricity prices, and I will certainly return to that issue during this debate. Another point I wish to make in relation to the current budget position is that one of the reasons the state is now flush with funds is as a direct result of the GST, which has delivered a financial windfall to the state and the ability for it to work through its debt and to spend on things that ought to be a priority. The Labor Party also opposed the GST. So, the irony is that the Labor government is in power today with a AAA credit rating as a result—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Politics isn't fair, is it, Wayne?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I take it that the Attorney has the decency and honesty to acknowledge these things as being the case, and I thank him for that. The Labor Party is in government today, and enjoying a AAA credit rating and financial buoyancy, because of tough, hard decisions made by a Liberal government. It is important that the state is well aware of that. However, one other thing has generated a financial windfall for the state, namely, the current level of taxation.

We now have the highest taxing state government in our state's history and that, combined with other revenue dividends, has assisted the current state of play. It is interest-

ing to note that, in the government's budget figures relating to 2005-06, it will collect \$2.2 billion more revenue than did the last Liberal government. A projected revenue stream of \$10 700 million will come into the state's Treasury in 2005-06, compared to \$8 500 million during the last Liberal government. That is an extraordinary lift in revenue—in the vicinity of 25 per cent of the state's budget. The interesting question to ask is: where has that money gone? We have seen demonstrations on the streets by groups of people wanting more money to be spent. We have seen the government's knee-jerk response, albeit insufficient, to the various disability action groups demanding more assistance for disabled children and to child protection groups demanding more assistance.

When the government has \$2 200 million more, why has it not been able to provide more, especially when one considers that, in order to buy its way into office, and to maintain its numbers, this government was prepared to increase its ministry by two—a ministry to the member for Mount Gambier and to the member for Chaffey, at a cost of \$2 million per year. Every year, another \$2 million (\$4 million collectively) is paid for their ministries—to cover their staff, their extra salary and their white car—so that they can sit on the government front bench and keep the Labor Party in office.

Of course, sir, you know full well that was necessary because the Labor Party did not get the majority vote at the last state election. The only way it could be here today was to buy its way into office, although, initially, it was through the cooperation of a former Liberal member of parliament, namely, the member for Hammond. When he expressed his displeasure to the government at the way in which it was maladministering the state's finances, what happened? The member for Mount Gambier was invited into the ministry and \$2 million was found; it could not be found for other groups in need, but it could be found to get the member for Mount Gambier onto the front bench.

Of course, what happened then was that the member for Mitchell said he would not be part of it, so he backed away from the Labor Party—and full credit to him. That created a dilemma and uncertainty for the government, so it needed someone else, and that someone else came forward in the form of the member for Chaffey. Make no mistake about it—this mob is prepared to pay whomever and do whatever is necessary to stay in government. They have absolutely no conscience about the way in which they conduct themselves, and that lack of conscience flows through to the very budget numbers themselves.

We have seen underestimates in previous budgets. In fact, in the 2002-03 budget we saw an underestimate to the tune of \$528 million; in 2003-04, an underestimate to the tune of \$794 million; and, in 2004-05, an underestimate to the tune of \$461 million. In total, that is \$1.783 billion more coming into this government's coffers than they had expected over the three years they have been here. So, they probably consider that a \$4 million investment to ensure that they have the member for Mount Gambier and the member for Chaffey sitting on the frontbench is a very small price to pay, particularly with that sort of a windfall.

There are a number of other reasons for that windfall. Some of it has been through various property associated taxes. For example, in conveyance stamp duties in 2004-05, we saw \$105 million more collected than was budgeted for—that is, 24 per cent more than the government expected. We saw the total collection of land tax increase from the project-

ed \$261 million in 2004-05 to \$292 million in 2005-06—this is even after the government's so-called rebates and relief. It will be a very interesting exercise indeed to see the reaction of property owners when they get their next land tax bill.

This Premier, in his usual knee-jerk fashion of seeking publicity to try and overcome a problem, told this place that he had solved the land tax problem. At the same time, he sent out to property owners letters and payments (containing his photograph) telling them the good news that he, the Premier, had personally intervened to ensure that they would not have to pay as much land tax. One thing I am sure of is that the Premier's photograph will not be on the next land tax bills. However, his photograph will very much be on the mind of those property owners as they go to vote Liberal at the next state election, because it is only then that they know that they will get fair recognition for their investment, which will encourage them to invest more to provide housing accommodation for people who need to rent because they are not yet at a stage where they can afford to buy.

I mentioned the Premier's photograph. It is well worth reflecting upon the fact that with this budget has come a state government advertising program. The Premier admitted in this place yesterday that the cost of his advertising program would be in the vicinity of \$200 000: that is \$200 000 to put Premier Mike Rann on every television set and in newspapers (the local media, the country media, *The Advertiser*, *The Independent Weekly*, and so on) to ensure that he and his government get maximum publicity.

One cannot help but reflect on a comment that the Premier made in this place when he was leader of the opposition. As my colleagues know, dates seem to stick in my head, and I can recall that on 19 June 2001, the Premier stood in this place and said something like: 'When you see a politician in a government-paid ad you know it's just a cheap way of doing the party ads.' However, when confronted with that yesterday—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You never see my photo.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: The Attorney-General interjects: 'You never see my photo.' If the Attorney, through that interjection, is indicating that he does not appreciate the Premier's duplicity, I again commend him for being so noble. This is something that we occasionally see the Attorney-General do, and when he does have these moments of honesty I am the first to stand up and applaud him. So, we have seen this government go back in a big way on something that the Premier believed was so vital.

There are a lot of things in this budget which do not stand up to scrutiny. They place a new spin on the politicisation of appropriation speeches in this house. For example, the Treasurer told us that 'no other government in recent memory has been as committed as this government is to cutting taxes.' This is the highest taxing government in this state's history. To say that his government is committed to cutting taxes when it is the highest taxing government in this state's history, does not add up. If this mob want to go out there and tell the electorate that they are cutting taxes when at the same time they are the highest taxing government in this state's history, they have plenty of hide, but one thing I am sure of is that South Australians are not stupid: they are paying taxes, and they know the reality of it.

The Treasurer also says that four Labor budgets have delivered a triple-A credit rating. It is not the four Labor budgets that have delivered a triple-A credit rating; the sale of the former assets of the Electricity Trust of South Australia and the lease of other assets brought about the triple-A credit

rating. Without that, it would not have happened; it is that simple. The Treasurer also said: 'Mr Speaker, for the first time in decades our state is consistently living within its means.' The state was living within its means under the last Liberal government; the state was not living within its means under the former Labor government, with former premier Bannon and now Premier Mike Rann, who was part of the ministry team, spinning like drunken sailors. It was not living within its budget then.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: We must not forget, of course, that this was the same government of which the Attorney-General was a part, and it certainly was not living within its means then. It may be the first time in decades that a Labor government has tried to live within its means but, as I indicated at the start of my address, this is only because of the incredible financial windfalls that have befallen this government in terms of the privatisation and asset lease process, taxes and charges (particularly property-related taxes) and the GST.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I am pleased to hear the Attorney-General parroting in the background to indicate that he, too, is aware of it. We have also seen much made of infrastructure and transport. This government, before the budget was laid down, released its infrastructure plan. One of the most significant problems with that infrastructure plan was that it did not allocate funds to the vast majority of projects. I enthusiastically went to the capital works budget that had been handed down in this house to see how many of those projects were going to be funded. Of interest is the fact that very little has been funded.

As was pointed out in this place yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition, when we compare the spending on infrastructure in South Australia versus that in Western Australia, a state of comparable population, we find that Western Australia is spending about triple. The simple reality is that Labor governments do not understand how to plan for infrastructure future, how to spend on infrastructure and how to make decisions about it. One needs only to look at the State Aquatic Centre site next to the Marion Shopping Centre to understand that this Labor government has been unable to make a decision for three years to allow that project to occur. It has thrown a few hundred thousand dollars into renovations of the Adelaide Aquatic Centre, which were announced as being necessary by the Liberal government about three months before the 2002 state election. It has taken the government three years to allocate even that paltry amount of money to make that resource slightly more useable than it currently is.

If we have a government that cannot make decisions, that does not know how to allocate money and can only deliver a financial surplus because it has unexpected gains coming in through an appreciating property market, it does not show a great deal of confidence for the future. I do not believe we will see sound economic management from this government because we certainly have not seen it from other ones.

Time expired.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I, too, have pleasure in making some comments about this budget, the Appropriation Bill, and I will raise some issues of concern as a number of my colleagues on this side of the house have already done. We need to put this budget into context. Last Thursday, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer rose to his feet and vowed to

be the herald of some tremendous news, but there was no really tremendous news to be announced because all the supposedly good parts of the budget had already been leaked. They were referred to as pre-announcements. All the supposed vote winners for the community had already been announced by the government, so when it came to the big day, it was actually a bit of a fizzer. Notwithstanding that, that is the way the government wants to handle these issues. The budget is of significant concern, so if the government wants to run this way, so be it. It was a day of no real outstanding news.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Then you won't need to comment on it.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I certainly will need to comment on it, Mr Attorney-General, because there are some issues that definitely need to be raised. The very first point is the supposed achievement of the AAA rating by the current Labor government's exceptional financial—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: It's not supposed, it's real.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: No, the supposed achievement of the current Labor government's AAA rating. We all know that it is the direct result of Liberal Party policy.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Yes, of course.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: The Attorney-General says of course it is. Isn't that fantastic! The Attorney-General admits that the AAA rating currently enjoyed in the state of South Australia is a direct result of Liberal Party policy.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: He admitted earlier that we fixed up the State Bank, too.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: That is excellent. The member for Davenport says that the Attorney-General has admitted that we fixed up the State Bank debacle. It is very clear that the Liberal Party does have the credentials when it comes to strong and sound financial management of the state's affairs, where Labor governments have been abject failures. I do not want to dwell on that particularly. The AAA rating has been a direct result of the privatisation of some of the state's assets and also the introduction of the GST, which was a federal Liberal Party policy initiative. We know that, unfortunately, when a previous federal Liberal leader campaigned on the GST issue in an election, he failed, but the present Prime Minister, John Howard, took the GST to an election and won convincingly.

What a tremendous contribution to the overall economic benefit to the country that has been. We have seen the income that this government receives increase by some \$2.2 billion over a four-year period. The annual budget for South Australia was around \$8.5 billion in 2001-02, and this year the estimate is \$10.72 billion.

One does not have to be a genius in arithmetic or mathematics to work out that that is about a 25 per cent increase in income. Any business, any person or any government receiving a 25 per cent increase in income would think that all its Christmases had come at once. That is what this current government is enjoying as a direct result of Liberal Party policy initiatives. So, when the Treasurer stands up in the house and tries to—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I'm amazed that you lost the last election.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We did not, actually. It is because you cobbled together a shabby, shonky deal that you were able to scramble yourself into government. The Attorney-General smiles: he basically admits that that is what happened. Nevertheless, I do not want to be sidetracked on

shabby, shonky deals that the Labor Party cobbled together: I want to talk about the deficiencies of this budget.

As I said, the income to the state has increased by some 25 per cent, and anyone would certainly welcome that. But the Treasurer gets up in the house and tries to convince everyone (in an unconvincing way, because no-one really believes it) what an outstanding job he has done in managing the state's finances. All he has really done is just steady as she goes; he has taken advice from the bureaucrats. He has done nothing outstanding. We see some tax cuts of \$1.5 billion over seven years. Well, whoopy-do! That is about \$200 million a year. Compared to a \$2.2 billion increase in revenue, it is only a very small percentage of the increase in income stream—and that bit of news was released before Thursday, anyway. I think some of the journalists described it very accurately. Why do you not say: \$3 billion over 14 years or \$6 billion over 28 years? It is just ridiculous. Whilst that tax relief package has been put in place, we do not see any long-term relief with respect to land tax. On the radio this morning I heard the President of the Land Tax Reform Association (I cannot remember his name) saying that no real long-term land tax benefit will be delivered to—

Mr Venning: Mr Darley.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Peter Darley; that is right.

Mr Venning: John Darley.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: John Darley. I am thinking of Peter Darley the footballer. The member is quite right. I thank him for that. Mr Darley agrees that there will be no long-term benefit to people who own investment properties because, as one can see in the budget figures, land tax will keep on increasing. If one refers to those papers one will see that the total collections increased from \$261 million in 2004-05 to \$292 million in 2005-06, even after the rebate and relief package has been delivered. This budget really is not delivering any relief to that group within the community.

However, I can tell members one thing that will happen. This Liberal Party will deliver an outstanding state taxation reform package leading up to the election. The shadow treasurer (Hon. Rob Lucas) in the other place has already spoken about that. He is on record saying that, if a Liberal government is re-elected, we will bring in a far-reaching state taxation reform package—not tinkering at the edges, as we have seen with this budget, but delivering some real benefit to the majority of South Australians.

If we look at some of the previous budgets and this current budget, we can see where the Treasurer underestimated the revenue that will be received. In 2002-03 the underestimation was \$528 million; in 2003-04 it was \$794 million; and in 2004-05 it was \$461 million, which is a total of \$1.783 billion. That is nearly \$2 billion of underestimates, or an average of \$600 million per annum. One would think that, if that is the level of funds that were underestimated, the taxation relief package could have been far more generous. However, I do not really think the Treasurer, apart from all his huff and puff and all the antics he carries on with, has a really clear and in-depth understanding of money.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: He is not a banker like you.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: That does not matter, but I really do not think he understands what money is all about. He gets confused between what he calls a strong budget and a strong economy. This is the point that has been made in the house previously: a strong budget does not equate to a strong economy. You can have a strong budget: all you do is keep on taxing people until they go out of business. You can have as big a surplus as you want, but if you keep this restrictive

taxation policy in place you will have no economy because all the money will be sucked out of the economy into the government's Treasury coffers. So, this is a pretty fundamental aspect that the Treasurer does not understand. Whether or not he was previously a banker has nothing to do with it.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I said he is not a banker. He is not a banker like you are.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: That has nothing to do with it. The point the Attorney-General raises is totally irrelevant.

I want to turn to a couple of issues relating to my electorate, the absolutely tremendous electorate of Kavel. One favourable aspect has come out of this budget, and that is the commencement of the funding of the Birdwood High School redevelopment project.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: All your good work.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Indeed, the member for Newland certainly highlights that point. The total project is \$4.7 million, and I understand that a commitment has been made by the government to meet that \$4.7 million cost of the project over a number of years. The first tranche of money is \$300 000 in this year, and that will enable the works to commence. The community in the north of the electorate around the Birdwood district is pleased with that announcement—there is no question of that—but it has not come without a lot of hard work. I have had a number of meetings with the school principal and the chairman of the school governing council. We sat down and worked out a strategy of how best to approach the government to maximise the chances of securing this money. I was very pleased to be involved in those meetings because nothing gives me pleasure more than being able to help the local community achieve what it wants to achieve. That is the reason why I stood for parliament in the first place—to help and assist the local communities achieve their goals—and I get a great deal of satisfaction from doing just that.

So, we see that the Birdwood High School redevelopment project is on the radar screen. That is something we are very pleased about. Unfortunately, that part of the electorate is being moved in the boundary redistribution into Schubert so, not wanting to make too fine a point of it, as a consequence of my hard work the member for Schubert will reap the benefit. But, we are a team on this side of the parliament, and we work together for the mutual benefit of the whole state.

Another issue that I am concerned about with regard to infrastructure development is the Mount Barker police station. Information has been fed to me by the community that the budget for the Mount Barker police station has been reduced, the figure of \$3 million having been suggested to me. I cannot corroborate that, because trying to get information from the offices of the Minister for Police and the Treasurer is near impossible. I have also been told only last week by members of the Mount Barker community that they have heard that the project is being further delayed.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Have they? Well, why don't you check it out? Why don't you talk to the coppers?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Well, I will endeavour to do that but, as I said, the answers that I have received previously on questions concerning this issue have not been very clear or concise. However, that is an issue we will continue to pursue. The construction of the new Mount Barker police station is something that I campaigned for in the 2002 election, and it is pleasing that it is progressing. However, there are some high levels of concern in the community that it is not progressing as well as it should.

There are other aspects with which I also have some issues. I continually campaign for improvement in road safety, and we see little spending on this but, rather, measures by the government to increase fines and taxation.

Time expired.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): The Labor government's fourth budget is literally a budget of mass funding proportions. It is also a matter of what you see is not what you are going to get. You take a proportion and divide it by the number of years that it would take to spend the mass amount suggested by the government to find what could be construed to be this year's budget expenditure. For instance, the government claims that it has provided \$1.5 billion in tax cuts. The announcement of this amazing tax cut for the benefit of all South Australians made the front page of our major newspaper. However, this mass funding proportion does not happen out of this budget this year. The government's \$1.5 billion tax cuts are actually spread over five years. I did suggest that, once you have the mass proportion, you should then divide by the number of years it will take to spend that amount, and you could then assess the approximate budget expenditure in this year's budget. Unfortunately, it appears that it is not as simple as that simple equation. We are now aware that the most significant cuts will not come in until the 2009-10 year.

So, South Australians who may have been somewhat pleased with that major announcement will have to put their pleasure on hold until the year 2010. In the meantime, the Labor government will continue, through this budget, to fill its coffers from ever-increasing revenue-raising techniques, and those who could genuinely have expected that the government was listening to their hardship calls will be bitterly disappointed. These so-called tax cuts will actually raise more revenue. That is indeed a new innovation by a government. The loudly-proclaimed land tax cuts are a perfect example. The budget papers show that the government expects to profit by a massive 30 per cent in land tax revenue this year and expects another \$30 million extra next year.

This duplicitous government beats its chest to the public of this state about cuts that generate more revenue, but it is not a budget about smoke and mirrors: it is actually blatant dishonesty. That dishonesty is compounded by a Treasurer who has underestimated revenue in each of his last three budgets.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I thought I knew you.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: You do. That may not sound very unusual or significant but, when you look at the amounts of windfall dollars that apparently did not appear within the Treasurer's vision, you really need to question the ability of any Treasurer who did not see the mountains of dollars descending into Treasury coffers at the rate of approximately 600 million in each of the last three budget years. This Treasurer underestimated the 2002-03 budget by \$528 million; the 2003-04 budget by \$794 million; the 2004-05—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: That is right. I well remember. The 2004-05 budget was underestimated by \$461 million. Can a competent Treasurer underestimate some \$1.8 billion over three years? I do not think so. I am sorry to say that there are really only two options: either the Treasurer is totally incompetent or he is undeniably deceitful.

Mr Goldsworthy: He does not understand: that is the problem.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: That is why I was giving the two options, although I know which one I would choose from the two options.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: On a point of order, is it parliamentary to refer to another member as 'deceitful'?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, it is not. Were these the words of the member for Newland?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Yes. I ask you if you will request that the member for Newland withdraw the adjective 'deceitful' as it is unparliamentary applied to any member. As I understand it, it is not necessary for the Treasurer himself to seek withdrawal. Because it is unparliamentary, any member can ask.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not hear the exact words. I think it would be helpful if the member for Newland did withdraw.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: It is not my understanding that the word has ever been ruled unparliamentary, but I will remove it and use the word 'untruthful', which I know is not an unparliamentary term. The real question is now: what happened to the \$1.8 billion? We do know from the budget papers that the government budgeted to have some 67 926 public servants at the end of June 2005. However, as a testament to other ministers' inability to control their portfolios, the budget papers show a blowout of that figure to 69 468 public servants, an increase of some 1 842 public servants over and above the government's own budget figures.

No wonder this government has procrastinated over enterprise bargaining with public servants: \$184 million extra for 1 842 more salaries than its budget estimate must have set some heads rolling when this was discovered. Where else do we find wastage in this government's spending? We can talk about the Sturt Street school, a further budget blowout from \$2 million to \$7 million; ministerial staff, increased costs of \$16 million over four years; and two new ministers to shore up the government, \$2 million dollars each year. That is another \$16 million over four years. The Margaret Tobin Health Unit at Flinders Medical Centre had a blowout of \$10 million to \$17 million, and nearly 400 more public servants are earning more than \$100 000 a year.

I well remember the Premier, whilst in opposition, proclaiming in his 'tough is my middle name' pose that the number of these fat cats earning fortunes out of the public purse would be cut immediately. In fact, he was so sure that this cut would take place that he suggested 50 would go. The Premier and the Treasurer have turned a cut of 50 into an increase of 400. That actually sounds very much like the government's tax cuts that turn into extra revenue for the state.

The other areas where we could point to the wasted millions of dollars that have occurred over this past year include: the Housing Trust rentals with an outstanding debt of some \$10 million; the Port River bridges—the opening bridges; the possible \$50 million to \$100 million blowout in costs of the expressway project; green building—a \$7 million subsidy from the government; and government boards and committees. Now there is a good chestnut for the Premier and the Treasurer to look at.

I also well remember that, when the Premier and Treasurer were then in opposition, there was quite considerable discussion about the fact that the number of committees and boards that did not need to survive within the government

sector should be reduced dramatically. So what do we find today? We find little or no action on cutting of boards and committees. We do see an increase from 517 boards and committees at a fee cost of some \$9.4 million at June 2002 to 531 boards and committees at a fee cost of \$10.1 million at June 2004.

I really do not believe that the taxpayers of this state are going to be bought off by what really appears to be, in no uncertain terms, a cynical pre-election handout after three years of being ripped off by the highest taxing government in South Australia's history. The Treasurer claims supposedly the biggest ever tax cuts this year. But, of course, we all know in this place that this will occur only because we have seen the biggest ever rip-off of taxpayers by any government over the past three years, and also because the Federal Treasurer, Peter Costello, forced the Treasurer of this state to cut a range of business taxes. When you have a closer analysis of the budget, it will show that land tax collections next year will actually be \$10 million higher, even after the supposed land cuts. As I mentioned earlier, there is an expectation of a further \$30 million being brought in by this government's measures the following year.

Speeding fine revenue is another little chestnut. The government continues to establish quite strongly that it never does anything in terms of road safety that will bring in extra revenue. But it is interesting to see that speeding fine revenue will actually increase by some \$25 million due to the new measures being presented in this budget at a cost of some \$48 million extra to the taxpayer, because of the new locations of new speed cameras that are going to be purchased and sited in a range of areas within South Australia.

Payroll tax collections are up by \$36 million. Here is an area where business in this state has been seriously asking for some form of consideration in terms of payroll tax. But they have been ignored by this Labor government, and we see that payroll tax collections are now up by \$36 million, and there is no relief for small businesses, which still have the lowest tax-free threshold of all states.

Then we look at the gambling industry which, of course, this Premier and Treasurer have taken on with quite damaging comments to the industry itself in terms of the robber barons. Even with the new measures that have been brought in by this parliament to reduce gaming by 2 000 machines, we can see that the revenue continues to rise, even with that promised cut of more than 2 000 gaming machines.

The emergency services levy is of course, extracted from almost everyone in the state. The government no longer needs to increase the actual levy, because with property taxes and their increased valuations they rise quite automatically. The government can sit back and suggest that it has not placed a levy on people in this state through the emergency services levy and believes that it is doing the right thing. However, all the government has to do is sit there and watch the money fall into its lap. In this instance, we are going to see collections up by 6 per cent, which is another \$10 million-odd in revenue above that which will come through that area.

Of course, the important thing that has not been mentioned and does not get mentioned often is that it is the people of the state who are paying those extra dollars into that area of government coffers. Of course, when you have water rates and bus fares that are all organised, owned and operated through government, I hope no-one out there believes that these tax cuts will actually reflect what they are going to pay in water rates, bus fares, car registration fees and other fees and charges, because I can assure the house that the budget

shows they are all going up as well, most of them by 3 per cent and over. All of that, including looking at total GST and revenue coming into South Australia next year, will amount to a staggering \$3.4 billion—that is, \$3 460 million. That is a huge amount that is going to be once again ripped out of the taxpayers of the state and into the coffers of government, without many of us actually seeing where all the tax dollars have gone.

The Treasurer will collect from the people of South Australia some \$2.2 billion more revenue in this next year than in the last Liberal budget of 2001, but no-one can actually understand what they have done with it. The \$2.2 billion extra each year amounts to some \$42 million extra per week, or \$6 million extra per day over and above that which was collected by the former Liberal government.

It is quite obvious to see from these papers that a lot of extra money has simply been wasted. This budget does not point to any cut in hospital waiting lists; there is no significant improvement in schools; and there is no improvement in road maintenance and other critical infrastructure. In fact, one of the major problems with this week's budget was that there was no extra money to retain specialist doctors and train more medical specialists.

The Premier and the Minister for Health are well and truly in electioneering mode, out and about in electorates attempting to sell this budget to their constituents, and to our constituents in Liberal electorates. Since December last year, I have raised in this parliament the horrendous third world conditions that have beset the entire health system in South Australia, in particular, the massive waiting lists now totalling thousands of people who are waiting to get an appointment to see an orthopaedic specialist: and that is before they can be placed on a further waiting list for corrective surgery. I have spoken about the 90 year old woman, the 66 year old woman, the 83 year old woman—all in agonising pain on pain killers—and the latest notification from Modbury Hospital advising that those with current problems would be placed on a 44 month waiting list just to get an appointment with a medical specialist. No answers to these problems have been given by the minister, or even an attempt to seek resolution.

When the Premier and minister advised residents in the north-east that they would be visiting the area on a meet and greet visit, I was asked whether I thought that it would be a good idea that some of the people on these outrageous waiting lists should attempt to meet with them. I could only agree that it was a good idea for a face-to-face with the only people who could make a difference to their unfortunate circumstances. Imagine our astonishment when the Premier's car arrived at the appointed location chosen by the Premier and the minister—took one look at the small group of elderly pensioners with walking frames and walking sticks, and the array of media cameras poised to capture this meet and greet moment—and the Premier disappeared. He took off, disappearing somewhere in this vast car park, adjacent to the very place nominated for the meet and greet.

Not to be deterred, the media and the disabled pensioners tracked through the car park to find the recalcitrant Premier and minister. Can you imagine the irony of this picture? The Premier disappeared because he was scared of half a dozen poor disabled pensioners on walking frames and walking sticks. We found him at last and there was the media tracking slightly uphill, and there were these poor disabled pensioners attempting to catch up so that they could raise their concerns with a Premier who took off the moment he saw them. Now,

the Premier and the minister did patiently listen to the concerns expressed by this small band of badly affected constituents. Did they get an answer? Would it surprise you to know that they did not get an answer? What were they told—and would it surprise you to also know that after three and a half years of Labor government, and four Labor budgets the answer given by the Premier and the minister was that the Liberals did something when they were in government way back when, and that these massive current waiting lists must be their fault, even though during a Liberal government we never experienced the outrageous waiting lists that have appeared only since the Labor government started making the decisions that created the current problems? It was ironic that the Premier was prepared to re-state publicly the old chestnut that Modbury Hospital was privatised by the Liberals.

Why the Premier has to be so dishonest about this public hospital was a wonder to the people gathered to listen to his wise words of comfort. They did not hear any words of comfort, nor did they get any answers. However, today in my mailbox I got a letter from the Minister for Health, and she advises me that she is providing me with figures to demonstrate that the government has achieved a turnaround in terms of elective surgery, and she encloses a press release. How interesting. The only thing that the minister has right is that she has achieved a turnaround in elective surgery, because we now have people on waiting lists that are hidden, and they number some 6 500. We now have people who are going to wait four years before they can even see a medical specialist, and we have a Minister for Health who sends me a ridiculous letter that cannot even address the situation.

Time expired.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill in relation to the 2005 budget. It is the fifteenth time that I have done this. Before I do that, I want to congratulate the member for Stuart, the Hon. Graham Gunn, for achieving a magnificent milestone yesterday—35 unbroken years in this place—and to consider that the member is still sane and fresh, I am totally amazed. I do not think that I could say the same if I stayed here for that long. Consider that the Hon. Graham Gunn came here when he was 27 years of age. I cannot believe all that life he has given to this parliament—life that he has taken from the farm and from his family. It has been a huge commitment and we should take our hats off to him. As he said in the house yesterday, he sat alongside my father on this very bench where we sit alongside each other now. So, this very important occasion is not lost on me, and the fantastic commitment that Graham Gunn has made for his people, his electorate and the people of South Australia.

Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I also came in with the Hon. Roger Goldsworthy, and young Mark Goldsworthy is now the current member for Kavel: we call him the marvel from Kavel. I also pay tribute to the Hon. Graham Gunn's wife, Jan Gunn. It is a good example to us all to see this wonderful relationship that they have. She is a very long suffering, very patient, and very understanding wife, and she is often told that, and it has been a great partnership. So, I also congratulate her, because she has made a big sacrifice to have Graham in this place for so long. Well done, and I hope that he has a lot more years to go yet, because if I want an ally in battle in this place I will choose the honourable member for Stuart every time to battle with me, because he will stand alongside,

and he will stand hard and will not lie down, and many a campaign we have won, and I congratulate him for that.

Also, I want to congratulate the Premier on his recent engagement. We all read about it with interest, and we wish him well. Also, congratulations today to all of those involved in achieving the warship project, and our thanks to the federal government for giving us this very favourable consideration. We will deliver in our state—whether it be a Labor or Liberal government it does not matter. It is a victory for us all, and I join with the Premier in congratulating everybody who had anything to do with it.

I also congratulate the member for Kavel. In his speech, he said that, at the election, he will hand over some ground to the electorate of Schubert, particularly in the area of the Hills, namely, Gumeracha, Kersbrook and Inglewood. He has looked after those areas well, but they are coming into very good hands. I thank him for his efforts. I remind him that I have lost Kapunda—an area that has been fantastic to me—and I am very sad to lose it. I am pleased that the member for Kavel has prepared the new area for me. He has performed very well, and the person who trained him certainly knew what he was doing. So, what I have lost on the one hand I have gained with the other.

I now turn to the budget. I was very disappointed, as I thought that an election budget, such as this, from a government with funds galore, would have been quite spectacular, with something for everybody. But, no; it is a total disappointment and a total fizzer. I am a country member, and very little recognition has been given to about a third of the people in the state. The one vote one value concept has killed rural South Australia. I know those words go back to the 1960s but, since the introduction of the one vote one value concept, country South Australia no longer matters. I do not know what we can do about it, but we must do something, as governments, particularly Labor governments, just ignore country people. There are no votes there, so there is no money, and no budget more than this one reflects that problem. The budget contains nothing for country hospitals, except for \$8 million less than last year and \$36 million less than was allocated by the previous Liberal government. They call this fair.

My pride and joy, the Barossa Hospital, which serves the greatest region in our state, does not even rate a mention—nothing. The previous government promised that it would build a new hospital, beginning in 2004-05. I challenge any member of parliament to visit the Barossa Hospital and see why everybody agrees that it is the worst hospital building in South Australia. Federal members of parliament have visited it and have said that the building is an absolute disgrace. I say to the Public Works Committee and DAIS: you all agree that the hospital building is the worst in South Australia, yet it does not even rate a mention in the budget papers.

The budget document is blatantly political, and I do not think it is fair. There has to be a way that I, as a local member, can appeal against activity such as this, because it is not fair. I say again—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: So, what is Fawcett doing about it?

Mr VENNING: I have spoken to the federal government, and it is happy to fund it, as long as the state will do so jointly. I am told that it cannot do it alone. I am happy to ask the federal government to fund the hospital totally.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Have you?

Mr VENNING: I have asked.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Why aren't they doing it?

Mr VENNING: They say that, quite rightly, it relates to state government, although it is quite happy to come alongside. The state government creates its priority, and the federal government backs it up with shared funding. That is what has happened in every other case.

As to education, again country schools were ignored, although two allocations were made: this year, a total of \$400 000 for the redevelopment of Nuriootpa High School and Kapunda High School. But \$400 000 is the total expenditure in my whole electorate—that is it, nothing else. It is an absolute disgrace, totally embarrassing and totally inadequate. As the minister knows, the Barossa is the powerhouse of this state's economy and generates \$35 million in taxes and charges to his government, yet the government returns this paltry amount. It is just not fair. As a local member, I feel as though I have failed. When we were in government, I thought we were reasonably fair, and I made sure that, if any member had a need, we addressed it, irrespective of where it was, who was the local member, or anything else.

Mr Caica: Ask the QEH people whether you were fair.

Mr VENNING: We were spending money there. I tell my people that I have failed, but I am not finished yet. I will do everything possible, because it is not right that such a paltry amount of money should be returned to an area that generates so much for the economy of South Australia. Where is this government's social conscience? It does not have one. It is so political, so arrogant and so deceiving of the people. It is an appalling situation and, again, I say: one vote one value has destroyed country South Australia. We have very serious needs.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Sorry—you are against one vote one value?

Mr VENNING: The minister picks me up on this issue. I am not saying that I am against the principle. However, the current political system is that the money goes where the votes are—to a few marginal city seats. I wonder whether the Barossa will ever get a new hospital. The whole health system seems to be in a bit of a mess. The minister says that it is stuffed, and she has just said that she has asked the federal government to take it over. The minister says that the system is stuffed but then underspends her health budget by \$35 million. That sum would have built three Barossa hospitals. True, the system is stuffed—and the minister has stuffed it. You wonder why people get aggro!

We also need new roads, as well as power and water upgrades. We need new tourism infrastructure, and we need the wine train. We are not asking for money, just the ability to do these things. We need public amenities everywhere, and we need new recreational facilities. In an election budget, you would have thought that these issues would at least have been recognised, but no, there is nothing, not even some long-term predictions, not even an extension over four, five, six or 10 years—nothing!

This Labor government is different from most: it always kills the goose that lays its golden eggs. This government will screw development. Business optimism is down, and again we are becoming the mendicant state in Australia. We are not able to share the economic growth of all our neighbouring states. We will be back where we were in 1993 after the State Bank. With all the extra funds from GST payments, we have gone from an extra \$2.26 billion from when we were in government to \$8.56 billion now, to \$10.76 billion in this budget, which is \$46 million for every week that we are here. They have at their disposal \$46 million, but the question is: where has the money gone?

Other windfalls for this government include taxes, particularly land tax, which we are all paying. We would not mind if it was going to a good cause. There have been huge increases in taxes and charges, especially property taxes, not to mention speed camera and poker machine revenue, etc. This government is so arrogant that it totally ignores the country sector and rural industry generally. It is dividing the country into first and second-class citizens. While the city dwellers will be riding on the new trams, country people, who have no alternative, will be driving their cars on dirt roads (or, at best, rough bitumen roads). The backlog on the road maintenance bill is \$200 million, and how much is in this budget? \$20 million. That must be a misprint. There is a zero missing, something is wrong. If you look a bit further—you have to be kidding—it says \$40 million for red light cameras. Someone had better tell me that I have got this wrong. Is money raising more important than maintaining our road assets, particularly when we are talking about the fatalities on our roads?

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

Mr VENNING: The member for Heysen says that it is with this government, and she is exactly right. This is hypocrisy at the highest level. If you cannot find the money with the government coffers as full as they are, you are never going to. This is a citicentric government, but it governs at the discretion of two country members: the members for Mount Gambier and Chaffey. Today in question time the Attorney-General referred to the Rann National/coalition government. He said it in one: a coalition government. I wonder if the people of the Riverland are going to like being reminded of that?

We have a coalition between the National Party and the Labor Party here in South Australia, because the member for Chaffey is a member of the National Party. What will the people think about their country electorates being ignored? What will the people of Chaffey and Mount Gambier think about this budget? I remind the house of what the previous government spent in the electorate of Chaffey: a new Berri Bridge; a new irrigation scheme; a new school; a new sporting facility; a new \$19.6 million highway. Add that lot up and what have you got? And what do we have this year? An absolute disgrace, and that member keeps this government in power.

I am sure the member for Hammond regrets what he did. I have never asked him, but I think he does. However, I do not know what the members for Chaffey, Mount Gambier and Fisher think of this budget, because I think they are all advocates of free enterprise, of private enterprise, particularly in their representation of country people. I say to the members for Mount Gambier and Chaffey: how can you explain your actions in supporting a government such as this? You have both done well to be made minister—and I congratulate you for that. You are enjoying all the trappings of office, white car included. These two members have turned their backs on their constituents. A word comes to mind but I will not use it because the member has just walked in, but it begins with the letter 't'.

What does the Economic Development Board think of this budget? Consider its recommendations and then look at this budget. Where are the export enhancement projects, where is the 'can do' government ethos in this budget? There are some positives. The development at Outer Harbor is one. I agree that the previous Liberal government did not get it all right, either. I give credit to this government (particularly minister Conlon) for putting the new port in the right place

and for getting the bridge project under way—eventually—especially the dredging to 14.2 metres and the channel and the berth to 16.2 metres, which I believe has already been done.

Again, the government has run into a political problem: it cannot make the obvious decision. It has got itself into another difficult political situation and it will now build a lifting bridge at a total cost of \$238 million, with ongoing costs of over \$3 million each year. A fixed bridge would have cost \$141.5 million—a saving of \$96.5 million. Over 30 years, the lifting bridges will cost an extra \$90 million to operate and maintain, whereas fixed bridges would have only cost \$13.1 million. So, for lifting bridges we will pay out an extra \$96.5 million just to build them, and an extra \$77 million over 30 years to keep them operating. That is \$90 million versus \$13 million—and probably after five years they will not be opened at all.

Remember the Adelaide Oval light towers. Remember all the fuss and fiasco that went on there? This is exactly the same scenario. What did that fiasco cost, and what was the end result? We ended up with fixed towers. What an expensive lesson that was, and I believe we are going the same way here. Our government attracted criticism over the soccer stadium. At least today we have an asset which is being used and which is appreciated by many South Australians. What of the South Road tunnel? That is a huge cost. If Labor had not sold off the MATS plan we would not need to do expensive things such as this.

I welcome our winning the warship contract. We will build a huge ship lift. Can it be jointly used for other interests, particularly ship repairs, and—dare I say it—a clean, green ship breaking industry? I think there is such a thing. Being able to lift them out of the water will make the process much cleaner. Will this project come to the Public Works Committee is the question. I hope it does, because we have not seen too much work coming before the committee lately, at least in the last 18 months.

I am very concerned about this budget. Issues in my area have not been addressed, even though through correspondence ministers have acknowledged them. I will list them. I led a delegation from Mannum aged care homes to then minister Wright. That group wanted land to build a new aged care home with private money, at private expense, but it wanted to get an area of unused land from SA Water. Nothing happened so the group decided to go somewhere else, and it has run into troubles there with the PAR, which has to be changed. This government is supposed to be a can-do government—impossible! I have already mentioned the Barossa hospital, and there are ongoing problems with drug driving.

I mention lights on the Sturt Highway at the Barossa Valley Way intersection. That is a very serious situation. We see a lot of deaths on that stretch of highway, and the minister told me 18 months ago that overhead lights would be put on that intersection. But what has happened? You guessed it—nothing. Lights are needed at the railway crossing between Angaston and Nuriootpa. That is another very dangerous intersection, a crossing on an S bend. Fatalities have occurred there. The minister said that she would look into that. What has happened? You guessed it—nothing.

The same thing could be said about Birdwood High School, but we have some allocation for that school in this budget and I am pleased about that and I give thanks for it. The Eden Valley corner is a bad corner, and the Premier answered my question a couple of weeks ago. It is still there,

it is still dangerous, and people live right behind a very dangerous corner. If something happens, it is all on the record. I have tried my best, but nothing has happened. It is not even acknowledged as being a problem.

I also mention the Barossa wine train. All I want is for the government to allow this to happen. I do not want money. All I want is for the government to help with the insurance to cover the indemnity that I hope they will never need. If it were put under the Transport SA umbrella, that train would run again. Nothing is said; nothing happens. I know that minister Conlon has it with him at the moment and I hope that he will give it due consideration quickly and we will see the wine train running again.

Time expired.

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): The Treasurer said that he has no problem about not keeping his promises because he has the moral fibre to say he has changed his mind. He does not mind misleading South Australians either. The Treasurer spouts good news of land tax cuts despite knowing, but not advertising, that land tax collections in the next year will rake in for him \$10 million more in revenue than this year. He certainly does not sing so loudly the increased collections of 6 per cent from the emergency services levy, nor that he is the highest-taxing treasurer around with water rates, bus fares, car registration fees and other fees and charges up by an average of 3 per cent, all coming from the pockets of South Australians. That is all despite the total GST revenue coming into this state of \$3 460 million next year. While accepting \$3.46 billion in GST and upping fees and charges on one hand, he blatantly advertises \$1.5 billion in tax cuts when many of these so-called tax cuts do not come into effect until 2009-10. Just what is he doing with the money? Where are our funds going?

Every line of this budget has the element of a change of mind coupled with a distressing lack of vision and bad economic management that I believe will lead us back to the situation where the people of this state will put in a Liberal government to fix up the mess. I hope that they will recognise the problem and change back to a Liberal government on 18 March next year and that this time it will not take a disaster of the magnitude of the State Bank to do it. Examples of mismanagement and short-sightedness must include the provision of water for Eyre Peninsula.

In the 2002 budget, the Labor government promised a \$32 million PPP for a desalination plant for Eyre Peninsula. That was reiterated in various forms in each of the subsequent budgets, with the former minister for administrative services stating on 4 June last year that it was written in blood. Water is badly needed if we are not to overdraw the underground resource and to meet the needs of the estimated 5 000 new developments expected within the next three to five years on Eyre Peninsula which have been identified by the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board.

Let us look at the ideas the government has come up with to solve Eyre Peninsula's critical water shortage this time—extending the pipeline from the poor old River Murray across the top of Eyre Peninsula. Rather than applying vision and finding a new source of water, the government is proposing to spend \$48.5 million on a white elephant garden hose that will be outdated before it is built and will put even more pressure on the critically depleted Murray. If I hailed from the Riverland, I would be very unhappy with this short-sighted solution, something perhaps that the Minister for the River Murray should ponder. Minister Wright has said that the

water for Eyre Peninsula will be bought from South Australian and interstate irrigators who already hold water allocations.

Instead of buying those allocations to increase environmental flows, which we were all told was why we were paying our River Murray levy, that water is going to be pumped to Eyre Peninsula, a point that I am sure will not go unnoticed by all those paying the River Murray levy. Not only is the water coming from the Murray but the money is going to come from the taxpayers. This is at a time when, as I have already told the government numerous times, private companies have expressed interest in building a desalination plant at Ceduna to service the town and surrounding areas. A private company is currently offering to build a five-gigalitre plant for \$20 million, less than half the amount this government is intending to spend on providing a garden hose from Whyalla to provide highly chlorinated water thousands of kilometres from the River Murray which will initially provide a comparative dribble of only 1.4 gigalitres. The proposed desalination plant would meet more than half of Eyre Peninsula's current water requirements and all the government would have to do is pay the company a fair price for the water which would then be sold to householders and businesses through SA Water at the usual price. This good quality water would cost SA Water less than half the \$3.60 per kilolitre it currently costs SA Water to get highly chlorinated and mineralised water to Ceduna that ruins pipes, taps and water softeners.

Last week we had the ridiculous spectacle of two government ministers contradicting each other over what is going to happen to the River Murray. On Tuesday 24 May the Minister for the River Murray (Hon. Karlene Maywald) put out a media release warning that River Murray water users face further restrictions in water allocations in the order of 70 per cent from the start of the 2005-06 year. This will follow current restrictions for the 2004-05 year. She said that this would be necessary because of the extended dry period in the Murray-Darling Basin over the past three years—which, unfortunately, looks set to continue. I quote from the minister's press release as follows:

Inflows to the River Murray continue at historically low levels, showing that the Murray-Darling Basin is still in the midst of serious drought. Murray-Darling Basin Commission storage levels remain well below the long-term average.

Then on Thursday 26 May the Minister for Administrative Services (Hon. Michael Wright) announced that the government will spend \$48.5 million to extend the existing pipeline from the River Murray across the top of Eyre Peninsula to put more pressure on the river. This farcical approach to the state's most precious resource would be funny if it was not so desperate.

It is my hope that the Treasurer will have the moral fibre that he so flouts to change his mind once again back to the public private partnership and away from this current dumb idea. The \$48.5 million that he has committed to Eyre Peninsula could then be put to much better use upgrading, standardising and lengthening our rail network so that we could hook up to the Darwin to Adelaide line via Whyalla. What a boon for the state and for the member for Giles that would be. Then we would have a new transport option for grain and mineral exports, which will become vital if a number of proposed mining developments go ahead on Eyre Peninsula. The Rann government constantly states that it wants to triple exports. Eyre Peninsula is the key to this vision, but it will all come to nought if this government does

not have the vision or creativity to commit to infrastructure to support the vision.

The most recent example of Eyre Peninsula's mining potential was the announcement last week by Terramin Australia and Zinifex Australia that they will spend \$8 million on exploring lead, zinc and silver deposits north of Kimba. This combines with the coal, iron ore, gold, diamonds, graphite and mineral sands that are being investigated at present, and the salt and gypsum that are already being shipped out through Thevenard. We could use some of the money saved from this farcical pipeline for upgrading the Thevenard harbour so that larger shipping could enter to take our grain and our minerals, or we could use the savings on the road network to seal some of the 95 per cent of unsealed local roads to improve transport for the 30 to 40 per cent of the state's grain or the increasing number of tourists who traverse them.

It was good to see that the state government has at least set aside \$5 million to finish widening a dangerous section of the Lincoln Highway between Arno Bay and Tumbay Bay. However, I question why the project had to be stretched out over two years, given that the section is only 22 kilometres long. There is an urgent need for the final section of this rural arterial road to be improved for the safety of motorists and its vital importance to Eyre Peninsula's export industries.

I am also concerned that the government appears to have lost \$2.72 million in less than 24 hours. The following is a quote from *The Advertiser* of Friday 27 May regarding funding for regional South Australia: 'Fire affected businesses on Eyre Peninsula will receive \$5.4 million.' On the afternoon of Friday 27 May, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and the Minister for Environment and Conservation put out a joint media release headed: 'SA government commits another \$2.68 million for bushfire recovery'.

Reading the fine print, it transpires that the federal government is to be asked to match the \$2.68 million, making a total of \$5.36 million, just \$40 000 short of the announced figure. Presumably, this \$40 000 is the required co-investment from the land-holder (also mentioned in the fine print). The grant is over two years; therefore, the \$2.68 million is halved as far as the critical next 12 months is concerned. It is particularly critical, because rain has not yet fallen and drought is feared. It really is smoke and mirrors. One wonders how many more inaccuracies and incorrect figures are part of the budget.

A past big budget announcement of the Marine Innovation South Australia (MISA) project for a world class centre of excellence for research, education and development for temperate marine species in Port Lincoln has not eventuated. However, this government has some very strange priorities when it comes to education and research. It has just committed \$20 million to help a university from the United States to set up in Adelaide when MISA has not happened and our three existing universities and TAFE are finding it tough. There is a finite pool of students and funding, and now our institutions will have to compete with a university from the world's wealthiest country which, in the words of UniSA's Vice Chancellor Denise Bradley, has been given a 'leg-up' by our own state government. As she also pointed out, UniSA offers courses in countries in Asia, Europe and Canada but has never received funding support from governments in those countries. If the Carnegie Mellon University wants to come here, we should welcome it, but it should be able to do so standing on its own feet, because the \$20 million could be

put to much better use in our own institutions. And this from a government that condemned the former Liberal government for assisting businesses to relocate to South Australia. Could this have something to do with the fact that this is a Labor government and it would have been competing against other Labor governments and assisting those disgusting creatures called businesses?

This largesse also contrasts sharply with the state government's attitude to the chronic problem of overcrowding at the Port Lincoln junior primary and primary schools and the associated traffic and safety problems caused by a lack of parking and congestion. The lack of space on the junior primary campus means that some classes have to use classrooms across the road on the primary school campus. So, these quite young children have to make frequent crossings of a busy road to access services such as the library. John Chadwick, Assistant Director of Asset Policy and Capital Programs in DECS, has acknowledged that 'traffic management and safe access issues have been raised as a high priority need for the safety of students'.

Way back in November 2002 a project officer was hired by the education department to compile a brief for the state government on the options for Port Lincoln's schools and kindergartens, especially the overcrowded central schools, to once and for all look at the problem into the future. Public and private meetings were held in Port Lincoln the following year and the report was expected to be completed in April 2003. But here we are in May 2005 and it is yet to see the light of day, despite repeated requests to the minister (Hon. Jane Lomax-Smith) from me and many concerned people in the community. The Rann government had set aside \$250 000 in the 2002 budget to look at the problem. Only \$50 000 of the commitment was spent, and we still have nothing to show for it.

Meanwhile, Port Lincoln's population is continuing to grow steadily and the overcrowding in our schools is only going to get worse. In the 2002 budget, the \$5 million Ceduna school was promised. This included \$1 million from the federal government. Here we are at the 2005 budget and what is left of the promises is still not built. Presumably, it is another carryover that we will continue to wait for. The original Demac buildings brought from Adelaide that were put at Ceduna as a temporary measure in 1978 by the former government are still there waiting for the addition of the next lot of buildings to come from Adelaide. It is ludicrous that, despite \$178 million being committed for opening bridges, further millions being outlaid for overpasses, \$47.4 million being paid for nine super trams and \$21 million being paid for tramlines to be extended, the government does not appear to have included the \$500 000 that was requested by the regional cities to pay for the regional bus services. This government is putting higher and higher penalties on those who use the roads and, in particular, is critical of country road users, but we have no other options. No respite is given.

Hospitals in rural South Australia, too, have been duded by the Treasurer's budget, with \$8 million less to be spent on hospital rebuilding or building programs this year compared with last year—an astonishing \$36 million less than the previous Liberal government. Hospitals and health services in the previous Labor budgets have been severely underfunded and have had to cut their budgets and services. One only has to look at the chronic cuts to obstetric services in my electorate, forcing families away from their loved ones while waiting for the birth of a child, as an example.

It is just one more example of the lack of equity, waste of money and lack of vision and business sense of this state government, and there are plenty more in the state budget. Perhaps, though, this Treasurer, who changes his mind, is marginally more honest than the member for Lee, who stated in the house that Labor governments always keep their promises as we still wait for the 2002 budget's urgently required desalination plant for Eyre Peninsula that was 'written in blood'.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important debate. My attention was directed elsewhere as I just had drawn to my attention the publication *Towards South Australia's Natural Resource Management Plan 2005-2010*. My brief comments the other day seemed to get my friend the minister for the environment and natural resources somewhat agitated. However, I will not talk about that document—we will save that for another day—because I am sure this particular document will create a lot of interest. What I want to speak about is this important measure, because the house, in the next few days, will approve the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars for the provision of general services by the government of South Australia. I suppose the difference of opinion we have across the house is whether we are raising too much, how it is being directed and where it should be directed.

Those of us on this side of the house are not happy at the direction in which a lot of this money is going, but let me say at the outset that this country is very fortunate, and we in South Australia are very fortunate, because today the Prime Minister and his government have again demonstrated their great support for the people of South Australia. Just look at what this Prime Minister has done for this state.

First, after 100 years of discussion and doing nothing, we got the railway line from Alice Springs to Darwin, the north-south corridor. Who did it? Prime Minister Howard. Why does the state government have adequate resources to fund the services of government? There is a very simple reason: because of the GST. He is the first Prime Minister in decades who has provided the state governments, who are the basic providers of services for the people of their various states, with the resources they need on a long-term basis so they can plan and ensure that they have effective services.

Third, of course, today the frigate contract which is going to go to South Australia was announced. We are going to do the major constructing element of that. They are three very important decisions, and all have been in South Australia's favour. Of course, the fourth thing is the way the economy has been managed and the benefits which are flowing to the people of this country. I think we are very fortunate to live in a country that has such a strong economy. We are very fortunate, and I think—

Mr Koutsantonis: A lot of it is thanks to our farmers.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That is right, and that is a matter I will come to, but I want to talk briefly about the GST revenue. It was interesting to read in *The Australian*—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I will come back to that. Do not get excited. I have 17 minutes to go and I do not want to give anyone indigestion, so I will stop a few minutes before.

Ms Breuer: You have been practising for 35 years.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I say to the honourable member that I have plenty of time. I am in a particularly good mood. I would be in a better mood if we had a couple of inches of

rain but, nevertheless, I have every confidence that that is coming. I take it the comment of the member for Giles was a compliment, and I thank her for it, as I thank the member for Colton for his kind remarks earlier today. It certainly has been a great honour and a pleasure to be in this place for as long as I have been. There would be those in the community who would not agree with that, but I accept that as the cut and thrust of politics.

Ms Breuer interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Can I say to the member that they have invited me to go to the Coongie Lakes with the Premier in the middle of next week. I said to the kind young lady who invited me to go and be part of the team, 'Well, there would be people in your group who are probably not very keen on me,' and there was a little bit of sniggering on the other end of the phone. However, I am looking forward to it and I am sure they will appreciate my company and my comments up there. I do not know whether I will be invited to speak on that occasion. That depends on whether they can stop me, even though I am a bit shy coming to the microphone, because I know all the locals there. However, let us get back to the important issue of why the government of South Australia has sufficient money to carry out what we believe to be important public services. *The Australian* of 11 May, under the heading 'A \$9bn windfall for the states', reads:

The money raised by the Howard government's goods and services tax has more than doubled since 2004, and is expected to hit \$37 billion over the next year. The government revealed a \$9 billion GST windfall to the states in its budget announcement—representing leftover money after all states apart from NSW and Western Australia agreed to abolish business stamp duties.

South Australia is going to receive for 2005 \$3.4 billion, up 8.7 per cent. This has been a good thing. One of the things a lot of people do not seem to understand is that you have to pay the 10 per cent GST but there is a range of other taxes that are going to be abolished; taxes difficult to comply with and complicated. The other thing is that the government seems to have conveniently forgotten that on many items we were paying well over 20 per cent sales tax.

Mr Koutsantonis: And some that they are were paying nothing on.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That is correct. The honourable member is right. But in the general wash-up, when the total agreement is implemented, they will probably be paying less because they will be paying less income tax. This particular money, which the government has at its disposal, is being spent in many ways. However, in my constituency that I am going to inherit from the member for Schubert sitting next to me, there has been some money spent on schools. The member for Schubert and I are looking forward to the next term in parliament.

Money is going to be spent on both schools at Kapunda, which is a good thing. Unfortunately, nothing has been allocated to be spent on the road between Lyndhurst and Marree. If the will of the people had been put into effect after the last election, that road would now be sealed, greatly benefiting those communities. My constituents in the far north are still paying the River Murray tax, which is an unfair imposition on them. They are never going to be connected to the River Murray. They have poor water supply, and that in itself is an imposition that should be removed.

There is a very important measure that needs to be considered. My understanding is that the commonwealth has provided a considerable amount of money for South Australia

from the Roads to Recovery money, for those non-incorporated areas outside local government. My understanding is that the Outback Areas Community Development Trust was wanting to set the priorities for spending, and I do not think that has happened. I say to the minister that we need an assurance that that money will actually be spent where the commonwealth government allocated it, that is, for the areas outside local government areas. The need is there and what we need to do, if we want to continue to see these areas expand and develop the pastoral industry, the tourist industry and others, is have a good road system.

There is a vast amount of money, and it was brought to my attention by the office of the member for Grey on Friday night when I was attending a meeting at Peterborough. It will affect the member for Giles' electorate and I suggest that she also make inquiries. I understand that it could have been allocated to the Local Government Association and I want to know who is going to have the control and the allocation. I am sure the member for Giles has a number of suggestions, I have a number of suggestions, and it is a matter we need to be briefed on by the minister. I wanted to raise that today because it is very important.

The Roads to Recovery program has been an outstanding initiative of the commonwealth government. Sections of road are going to be sealed in South Australia that would never be sealed if it had not been for that program. I am sure that the member for Schubert's electorate will also benefit. A few weeks ago we had the federal Minister for Roads at a meeting in Hawker, and he indicated that it was his determination and desire at the end of this period to see another five-year period. That in itself would also be a very good thing. It is the wish of the current commonwealth government to see this program continue into the future. Everyone would agree that there is an ongoing need to spend more money on health, both by the state government and the federal government.

I appreciate what was done in relation to mental health facilities for the upper north, but there is an urgent need to ensure that the existing services are maintained and that people should not have to be transported long distances to other parts of the state or Adelaide. That, in particular, relates to aged care. A constituent in Port Augusta came to me last week most concerned that their aged mother would probably have to go to Hawker, and they live in Port Augusta. There is nothing wrong with the facilities; he was not complaining about the facilities. He did not mind going to Quorn, but it is a drag every day for one member of the family to go up and back a couple of hundred kilometres. I think that we owe it to the aged population to find the money to make more resources available in these major regional centres to ensure adequate beds and facilities for a range of aged care. The demand is not going to lessen: it will increase as we have an ageing population, and the demand for resources in these areas is going to continue to be very extreme.

Another area of concern to me is that in my constituency there are many people who are suffering because of the drought. I believe that it is incumbent on governments to ensure that the charges and fees they impose are restrained, and in some cases there have to be some rebates. People living in these areas have had very little or no income and have to register a number of vehicles purely for the purpose of maintaining what they have. The payment of council rates is becoming a real burden. The recent proposals announced by the commonwealth government are absolutely necessary.

One of the most frustrating things I have ever been involved with was a few years ago, when there was a process

to identify exceptional circumstances around Orrooroo and those places. I have never in my time witnessed such bureaucratic nonsense from the people who came from Canberra. At the end of the day, all these hard-working, decent people wanted was a fair cut of the cake and to be treated fairly. It was not their fault that it had not rained. They have not done anything outrageous. They are the salt of earth sort of people. I believe that the scheme needs to be more flexible and they ought to get assistance because, as the Foreign Minister rightly indicated this morning on radio, the rural sector is a part of the Australian psyche.

It is important that we have these people scattered across the length and breadth of this country. We do not want that nasty element within certain sections of the community that wants to drive people off. It is like those people who are attempting to drive the mountain cattle people out of Victoria. I hope the commonwealth government does interfere. I am not one for commonwealth intervention, but it should protect those people so that they can continue. It is a part of the Australian psyche, and there is nothing wrong with it. They are not doing any harm. It is just that you have a few trendy academics who live in the leafy suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne who are really not aware of what commonsense is, and they have these weird ideas and try to impose them on people. It does not affect them, but it certainly affects the livelihood of others. I sincerely hope the commonwealth does do something about it.

I have another matter to raise which is going to take a considerable amount of money but which, if it is left, will take more. I refer to the difficulties of dealing with the prickly pear outbreak, in the area out from Peterborough, Petersville, Blinman and some of the Riverland areas. This cactus is a very difficult plant to control. I am told that approximately 35 000 hectares is affected and, therefore, it is absolutely necessary to take very effective means quickly to contain and control it, because it is a dangerous plant that is doing no good to the environment. It competes with other native species; it is toxic to exotic animals; it is spread by animals and birds; it injures stock and native fauna; it contaminates raw meat and hides; its spikes can cause injury to people mustering on it; and it has a number of other unfortunate side effects. Therefore, the representations that have been made to me by the Upper North animal and plant control people are very precise and informed. I am looking forward to the government, particularly through the appropriate ministers, providing some funding to ensure that this plant is controlled.

Last Friday, I was invited to inspect a property at Booleroo Centre in my constituency where a well-known business wanted to subdivide the workshop from the business so that the contractors who operate it can have a secure title and some security, and can extend the workshop so that their employees, when it is 100 degrees in the sun, can be under cover. It is a pretty reasonable sort of exercise. SA Water, in its usual way, has come along and said, 'It's going to cost you over \$20 000.' There is water on the existing block. Both parties could use the one meter. At the end of the day, we want small business in country South Australia to continue. There are 10 people employed in this big machinery operation that serves the Booleroo Centre, the North and Eyre Peninsula. These people do not have \$25 000. They have ordered the shed to be put up, but they cannot do it because they want to subdivide it. They are not allowed to subdivide until Sir Humphrey in SA Water agrees to the process. The conditions which they have attached to it are unfair, unrea-

sonable and absolute nonsense. Only a bureaucrat would want to stand in the way of this.

I cannot for the life of me understand why SA Water is such an intransigent organisation. In my experience, it is one of the most intransigent and difficult groups to deal with. It does not appear to want to extend pipelines anywhere. I know the bureaucracy that was involved when the water pipeline was extended west of Ceduna—and, unfortunately, it has not yet reached Penong. I know what happened between Poochera and Streaky Bay. I am looking forward to the pipeline being built from Iron Knob through to Kimba because, in the early part of my political career, the Hon. Arthur Whyte and I had a lot to do with getting the pipeline extended from Polda Rock up to Kimba. I sincerely hope that all the stations along the route (I think there are two or three) can be connected to it.

We do not want to go through one of those exercises that happened when we ran the power out to Nepabunna and a couple of stations could not be hooked on. Fortunately, the then minister for Aboriginal affairs would not sign off until it was agreed to. For some reason, we have an intransigent bureaucracy. This arrangement which is affecting Booleroo agencies at Booleroo Centre is an absolute nonsense. I call upon the minister to get involved and tell these people to come to their senses and help those who only want to be reasonable. They should get on with it so that those people can expand and improve their business. I thought we wanted to encourage people to be involved in community activity and to employ people in rural South Australia. We want to have more people: we do not want to have fewer. These sorts of bureaucratic decisions are making it more difficult.

Another difficulty that I have experienced in the last couple of weeks is that the Native Vegetation Council, in its wisdom, will not let people remove trees so that they can build houses on blocks of land on the outskirts of Port Augusta. I put it to you, Mr Acting Speaker, that these people are also interfering with the expansion of urban development in Port Lincoln and other places. They do not want cemeteries to be extended. What do these people want? Do they want to live in tree houses? People spend a lot of money to buy a decent block on which to build a house. Do we want all the houses built on good agricultural land or do we want people to live in areas such as Port Augusta? I want to see people come and invest and live there, and make the place even better. They are on the up. For goodness sake, cooperate with the local council and let these people get on with their lifestyle.

Time expired.

Mr CAICA (Colton): I had not intended to contribute to the debate, but part of the reason for my doing so is that it looked like we were going to have to ring the bells. This is the fourth contribution that I have made with respect to the budget—

Mrs Redmond interjecting:

Mr CAICA: For the benefit of the member for Heysen, I think that in my short time here this is by far the best budget that this government has delivered. I am particularly pleased that there has been a focus on the disability sector. I think that will be of benefit to those people who most need those funds. The simple fact is that in a state like South Australia we are never going to have enough money to please everyone. This is a Labor budget, and it is oriented towards this government's priorities, and we make no apologies for that.

I sit here and listen to the other side, and with respect to the budget debates it has become obvious that no-one in the opposition can ever see anything positive in them. Well, we are not going to apologise for that. This is a budget of which I am extremely proud, just as I am proud to be a member of a government which has delivered such a budget. There are benefits in there to the broader South Australian community, and those benefits will continue beyond the length of this budget. It is a budget that takes South Australia into the future.

I am very proud of the efforts of the Treasurer and the various ministers who are responsible for the respective portfolios, to ensure that they were able to extract from the Treasurer the much needed money to enable them to deliver the best possible outcomes in their portfolios. It is an interesting thing about treasurers, sir—and I know that you have been involved in lots of organisations and lots of groups. The simple fact is that not many people like treasurers. It does not matter whether you are the treasurer of the local football club or the treasurer of the local Rotary Club.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

Mr CAICA: No. The fact is that they are often reluctant to allow the money that they have control over to be spent. It is as simple as that. I know from the organisations in which I have been involved, such as my union, that I had an enormous number of arguments with the treasurer with respect to how the money should be spent. I would like to congratulate the various ministers on the efforts that they have made this year to ensure that funds have been freed up to be spent in those areas of most need. I make no apologies for aspects of this budget because it is a Labor budget, and it—

The Hon. I.P. Lewis: Is there any money for jetties?

Mr CAICA: There actually is money for jetties.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAICA: I will say more on that in my grievance when I talk about the specific initiatives that relate to my area. However, there is some money for jetties, and I hope that in future budgets there will be even more money to spend on jetties. I would like to see the Henley jetty extended by three or four kilometres, but I do not think that will happen.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CAICA: That's right. Both the Henley and Grange jetties, amongst others, are in need of some repair—and they ought to be repaired—and, whilst it may not be correct to refer to them as tourism icons, these jetties certainly attract local people and people from other areas to congregate on and around them.

Mr Rau interjecting:

Mr CAICA: I'm not quite sure if that is right. I do not know whether I am the only member with two jetties in my electorate, but I have two of which I am very proud. These are jetties off which I have caught an enormous amount of fish and crabs. Even this year, I got quite a good feed of crabs off the jetty. They do attract people, and we need to make sure, as was pointed out, that they are properly maintained.

One of the points raised by opposition members with respect to the budget—and these are their words not mine—is how negligent this budget has been with respect to regional areas. When looking at the budget summary, I look at the amount of money being spent on regional schools. Of course, we know that if there is one common element in our lives it is our school and education system. That is, we are either about to go to school, we are at school, we have been to

school, or we have children who are going to school. So, there is that constant, and education is one of the priorities.

I do not think that regional areas have been let down with this budget with respect to the amount of money that is being spent within the education component of the budget. I do not believe that they have been let down. I believe that it is a budget for all South Australians, and a budget of which we can all be proud.

The Hon. I.P. Lewis: Is there enough money for the netting ban buy-back?

Mr CAICA: We might have to find some more money for that because there are those who, I think, are willing to free up their netting licences, and that ought to be properly explored. I commend the second reading and the bill.

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

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I rise to speak on this budget, and my first comment is that it is a budget of missed opportunities. For three years, we have waited for these opportunities, but it seems that they will not come in this term of the Labor government. If one remembers former Liberal governments—and there were two from 1993—one will recall that so many opportunities were taken. Although so little money was available to be spent in South Australia, enormous progress was still made. In fact, we were well on the way to tripling our exports by the time we left office. I give credit to this Labor government, because it also sought the same outcome, namely, to triple exports. Unfortunately, its export program has continued to go down. Not surprisingly, the Liberal government put a lot of time, effort and money into ensuring that our export program went from strength to strength.

In what way are there missed opportunities? I have already highlighted those relating to exports. In an ageing population, the issue we think most about is health. Unfortunately, from a rural point of view—and, as a rural member, I am particularly concerned with rural initiatives—the budget contains no extra capital works for this coming year. In fact, as my colleague the shadow minister for health states in his media release, there are ‘no new hospital building projects in the country in this year’s state budget’. He further states, ‘There are 66 country hospitals, and many are in desperate need of extra facilities.’ South Australia has relied on the rural sector to keep it a strong state so, surely, at a time when rural areas are screaming out for help because of drought, you should have thought that, in the third year of a four-year term, the government would at least expend extra resources on health in country areas. However, it seems that is not the case.

As my colleague the shadow minister for health says, the wait for elective surgery has worsened during the past year. In his media release, the Hon. Dean Brown also states:

The proportion of urgent surgery being done within acceptable times has fallen from 84% to 81%, while for semi-urgent surgery it has dropped from 85% to 76%.

It is a great tragedy that, in its third year of office, the government has not addressed this issue. You would think that this would be the time to do so, as we are heading towards an election that is less than 10 months away. I thought that it would be a free-for-all budget, with money flowing into health, education, police, roads and other infrastructure. However, that is not the proof of the pudding. The Treasurer seems to be more intent on keeping a AAA rating, but anyone can do that if debt is down. And, who got the debt down? The Liberal government did so over a period of eight years.

It was very interesting to speak to the Hon. Stephen Baker, who was treasurer from 1993 to 1995. My conversation with him occurred before the AAA rating was given to South Australia. He told me that, way back in his time as treasurer, he was advised that, because the state government had, even then, brought the state debt down significantly, certain things needed to be done over the next few years in order to give any thought to a AAA budget. One needs to remember that the Liberals were in power for eight years. After approximately two years, Stephen Baker was no longer treasurer, but the words spoken by the agency that gives the AAA rating were very much to the fore.

The Liberal government brought the debt down from approximately \$10 billion to about \$3 billion, or slightly less, and that was the trigger that would bring a AAA rating to the state. The rating was achieved but, unfortunately, it was not the Liberal government that received the accolades but, rather, the Treasurer (Hon. Kevin Foley). However, all the hard work had been done for eight out of those 10 years. I am quite amazed to hear the current Treasurer get up in this house and espouse the attributes of a balanced budget—in fact, not only a balanced budget but a surplus budget. I am happy to accept a surplus budget, but any government can achieve it if it taxes hard enough, rips off the money from the people of South Australia and simply ensures a surplus situation.

What really upsets me—and this has been identified by the shadow Treasurer where he poses the question—is the following:

What do you do when your budget surplus is going to turn into a budget deficit? Move the fiscal goalposts! Just change the definition of a budget deficit and magically turn it back into a surplus!

That is exactly what this Treasurer (Hon. Kevin Foley) has done. The Hon. Kevin Foley is not at all popular with the DPP. I hope that tomorrow he will apologise to the house and the people of South Australia for the outrageous remarks that he has made about the new Elliot Ness of this state, but I will not go into that now. What has happened in changing the fiscal goalposts is as follows—and again I quote from the shadow treasurer (Hon. Rob Lucas):

Kevin Foley boasted yesterday that he had kept the budget in surplus over the forward estimates period till 2009. However this has only been achieved by Mr Foley completely changing the definition of what was a surplus and what was a deficit!

I repeat: this has only been achieved by Mr Foley completely changing the definition of what is a surplus and what is a deficit. The Hon. Rob Lucas continues:

In his first three budgets, Mr Foley said the health of a budget had to be measured by a measure called ‘Net Lending/Borrowing’. However Treasury told Mr Foley that for three of the next four years the budget papers would show budget deficits as follows: 2005-06—\$10 million surplus; 2006-07—\$141 million deficit; 2007-08, \$88 million deficit; 2008-09, \$50 million deficit. So Kevin Foley decided to change the definition of budget deficit to a new measure called ‘Net Operating Balance’ and instantly all of the above numbers turned into services ranging from \$51 million to \$109 million!!

We have a budget sleight of hand. Kevin Foley has had to change the numbers; he has had to change the arrangements. Even when he has a huge surplus of money, he cannot keep the budget in surplus; not that keeping the budget in surplus is necessarily a positive or a good thing, depending on what any deficit would be spent on.

I will now look at my own electorate of Goyder. I referred to health earlier, and I asked what has the electorate of

Goyder gained in terms of hospitals and other capital works? In terms of capital works, we see that Goyder has gained by the factor of zero: nothing new for Goyder.

Mr Williams: That's like my electorate.

Mr MEIER: I hear the member for MacKillop interject: 'That's like my electorate.'

Members interjecting:

Mr MEIER: And other members say the same thing. Unfortunately, the vast majority of members on my side of the house say the same thing. It is outrageous that the Labor government has decided to prejudice Liberal or non-Labor held electorates and say: 'Stiff—you're not going to get anything.' Is that the way to run this state? Is that the way the previous Liberal government ran this state? It certainly is not. In fact, from memory, one of the electorates that received more money than any other was the electorate of Port Adelaide.

The Hon. M.R. Buckby: I spent \$3.5 million on a school down there.

Mr MEIER: As my colleague the member for Light interjects, he spent \$3.5 million on a school down there. It is a tragedy that the Labor government is determined to keep a budget surplus at the expense of non-Labor electorates, and that absolutely appals me. Let us look further beyond health, because health is only one thing—it keeps us alive, but we all have to die; so, if we have to die a bit earlier, so be it. Let us look at education. I think education is important, having been a teacher in my earlier years. How much is to be spent in my electorate on new capital works for educational facilities? Again, on looking at the budget, I see that nothing is to be spent on new capital works in my electorate in the area of education.

Mr Scalzi: Neither in mine.

Mr MEIER: I hear my colleague the member for Hartley interject: 'Neither in mine.' Speaking for some of my other colleagues, I know that nothing extra is being spent on capital works in their electorates either. What a travesty of justice.

Mr Scalzi: Some in Norwood.

Mr MEIER: My colleague interjects that there are some in Norwood, which is a very marginal seat. So, it looks as though the Labor Party is happy to spend its money on education in marginal seats but not in safe Liberal seats. Is that government for all of South Australia? Absolutely not, in no way at all.

We come to the next area—that of police. I think it must be for nearly two years now that I have heard the Minister for Police say, 'We are increasing the number of police by 200 and that is more than the previous government had.' What have we heard in this current budget? Yes; the government is going to increase it by 200, but when is it going to come into effect? Not in 2005—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

Mr MEIER: —but by July 2006, which is after the next election. Could we trust this government to honour that promise? Absolutely no way; it is still trying to ship in people from England, exactly as my colleague the member for Hartley says. It is a travesty of justice. In speaking with many of the police in my electorate, they are not at all happy. This government is certainly on the nose in so far as my constituents, and many of the police, are concerned. Let us have a look at some of the things on which they have spent money in rural areas. One of them is a new water pipeline from Whyalla to Kimba, which costs something like \$48 million. I just shudder to think how many roads could be fixed up in my electorate for \$48 million. We would just about be

halfway there. What chance is there of water flowing through this pipeline from Whyalla to Kimba?

For two years the government has been saying that we must have water restrictions, and water restrictions we have had. I do not go against those water restrictions, because I know from having been to Victoria some six months ago that they have even more severe water restrictions than we. There is not enough water to go around. Governments in the past have not provided sufficient new reservoirs. They have not provided other avenues for supplying water to their citizens, so water restrictions must apply. What is the jolly use of spending \$48 million on providing a pipeline from Whyalla to Kimba when there is not going to be enough water to put in it for a start? Secondly, from listening to my colleague the member for Flinders, I believe there is going to be insufficient water to provide for the needs of the Eyre Peninsula; in fact, they will still be on severe water restrictions—it is a total waste of money.

If we have a look at the infrastructure plan that was put out by the government for regional areas, a matter of weeks ago, do we see any mention of this new pipeline from Whyalla to Kimba? Mr Speaker, you and I and everyone here knows that the answer is no. It is a knee-jerk reaction simply because there is a very strong and competitive candidate who has been preselected for the Liberal Party in Whyalla, so the government has to do something to make it sound as though it is actually working in that area. It is a pathetic project. Perhaps the member for Flinders hit the nail on the head when she gave her speech here last week to identify her feelings towards it.

We also can see how this Treasurer does not know how to manage a budget. Again, I refer to a media release from the shadow treasurer, the Hon. Rob Lucas, entitled 'Anyone noticed Kev moved the fiscal goal posts?' I emphasise that, when your budget surplus is going to turn into a budget deficit, of course, we know what happens. The truth is that deficits occur. I suppose in everything I look at the news is not good. The thing that hurts me most is that, when I look at capital investments in the budget papers, and I look for the one thing for which I have been screaming out for three years since this government took office, it is the road between Port Wakefield and Kulpara. Only a 5.2 kilometre section is left undone because we had completely redone the rest of that road. I asked a question in this house last week about this matter, and the Minister for Transport said he would take it away and get an answer. Can I find anything in this budget in the capital investments statement? Mr Speaker, the answer is no. It is a minor thing—relatively insignificant. The government did not even put that into the darn budget. So, I know what the answer from the minister is going to be. It will be, 'No; I'm sorry. You have missed out.'

The Hon. I.P. Lewis: I hope Hansard got that intonation!

The SPEAKER: Order!

Time expired.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): I rise to follow the good words of the member for Goyder. He is quite right. When I walked into the chamber, I heard him talking about the situation in which this government finds itself in terms of financial largesse. I think back to the time when we first came to government in 1993 and, being a minister in 1997, what we would not have given to have the same sorts of surpluses floating around our ears as this government has floating around its ears, and indeed what we could have done with that to improve the state. Instead, we found ourselves with

\$9.6 billion worth of debt and then had to work our way out of it.

I also pick up the comments of the member for Goyder with respect to the AAA rating and the reasons that Standard and Poor's gave for South Australia's achieving that AAA rating. It is because of the GST and the additional income that this state is receiving therefrom and, as they stated (they are not my words), because of the sale of the electricity assets of South Australia to reduce the debt of South Australia. Both those issues the members opposite voted against but, of course, that is politics. One day you are in opposition and you can vote against those sorts of things, and the next day you are in government and, even though you voted against them, you lap up the benefits of them, and we all accept that.

This is a budget on which I agree with the leader on our side of the house. It is somewhat disappointing. I say that because of the enormous increase in funding, via the GST, that has come to this government from property taxes and stamp duty. All the additional revenues that have come in, firstly, because of the GST and, secondly, because of a property boom and the enormous increases in property values from which this government has benefited—

The Hon. I.P. Lewis: It is nothing to do with state policy.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: As the member for Hammond says, it is nothing to do with state policy. It is sheer good luck—it is as simple as that—and good management by the federal government in terms of the GST—

The Hon. I.P. Lewis interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:—and the management of the economy which, as the member for Hammond also says, has led to lower levels of unemployment and, as a result, more money floating around in the economy because people have jobs. Of course, there is a flow-on effect, because they then spend the money they are earning in their employment. As I said, this is a disappointing budget. An extra \$2.2 billion in income has come into this state since the time that the Hon. Rob Lucas was Treasurer, and one has to ask: what is this government doing with it? I would say not a lot.

I want to turn to a few areas within the budget. One of the biggest disappointments in this budget, I think, is the minute amount of funding that has been allocated to our state's roads. Everywhere I go in this state the same topic comes up, that is, the deteriorated state of the regional roads in South Australia. If one spoke to any member in this chamber who has a regional electorate, one would know that their local government would be saying to them, 'We cannot keep up with the backlog of maintenance for the roads because not enough money is coming through.'

I remember that in the first budget of this government the local government roads fund received only \$1 million for the year. The funding that went into the various programs that the Hon. Di Laidlaw had for arterial roads and heavy vehicle roads disappeared in that budget and it has not reappeared. The Outback roads gang was cut in the first budget: \$1 million was cut out and we were left with only one Outback road gang to do thousands of kilometres of re-sheeting on Outback roads. I had people on the Broken Hill line ringing me and giving me information about police cars that were coming in with four or five punctured tyres stacked up in their car because of the sheeting that had disappeared from these Outback roads. One fellow had a service station on the Broken Hill line (I cannot remember the name of the town), and he was repairing about 30 punctures a week just in that spot—and I am not talking about anywhere else in the Flinders or the Far North.

I think it is particularly disappointing that in this budget \$37 million is spread over four years. Just over \$9 million a year is to be spent on the state's roads, yet we have 11 per cent of the roads in the nation. The RAA has said that there is a backlog of some \$200 million with respect to our road maintenance. If we keep spending at the rate of \$9 million per year, I do not think we will make much of a dent at all in that \$200 million backlog. The RAA and members on this side of the house have been calling out for the government to spend more money on roads. But what happened? While the Premier was in England, suddenly we learnt that we are to extend the tram line from North Terrace to Brougham Place at a cost of \$30 million. Has any economic impact study been done on this—has any study been done on it? I think not.

The Hon. I.P. Lewis: I did one. The passenger per kilometre cost is higher than any other form of public transport.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: That is quite right. I think this is folly. It may well be that, in time, we might want to extend the tram line past North Terrace, but at the moment the priority should be on those regional state roads that are crying out for funding. Some of the bitumen roads in my electorate are becoming quite unsafe. The other day one of my friends who drives trucks for a living was talking about the undulation in the road north of Roseworthy on the Main North Road because of the amount of traffic it is carrying and the road settling. He said, 'It is becoming downright dangerous to drive on. There is a section of about 300 metres there that is becoming dangerous to drive on,' yet there is no funding for that road. Because of the undulation on Mudla Wirra Road (which runs between my old home town of Wasleys and Gawler, through the Roseworthy College campus), if someone was driving a truck carrying grain I would imagine they would be floating along—

The Hon. I.P. Lewis: It's worse than a Vomiton.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Absolutely. That is where the priority should be, not on extending a tram line at a cost of \$30 million. Has any work been done in terms of the economic benefit to the state versus the economic benefit of improving our roads? We have seen some big figures about tax relief—\$1.5 billion or some such figure. But, of course, the biggest part of it comes in 2008 and 2009, just before the election after the next one. Surprise, surprise! I do not think I have seen any government, in the time that I have been involved in politics (and that goes back to 1968, I think, when I joined the Young Liberals) that has extended the time period—

Mr Koutsantonis: When was it?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY:—1968—of tax cuts over five or six years. I have not seen that at any time. It has always been kept within the period of that particular government. It looks an impressive figure, but I hope the people of South Australia read the budget very carefully and realise that it is over some six or seven years rather than within the next four years. This government has looked at land tax relief, and the revenue that will be received from land tax is \$31 million more than this year. It is true that some people will get some respite, but we are still collecting a lot of money from land tax.

I see that the CEO of Business SA talked in the paper yesterday about the lack of reduction in the payroll tax rate and the fact that South Australia is now the most uncompetitive state of all the states in terms of payroll tax. I am sure the Premier is very pleased about getting the contract today for the building of ships in South Australia, and I am pleased

about that as well. However, the fact is that if we want our businesses to remain competitive we have to look at payroll tax, as it is one of the most regressive taxes that can be put on a business because it is a tax on employing people. Why would you want to have that if you could get away without it?

It is very interesting to see this Treasurer's ability to underestimate revenue. Over the past three years it has amounted to some \$1.8 billion, which is quite staggering, to be honest, when you look at the tools that he has through Treasury to come up with reasonably accurate estimates. However, he seems to be a long way out each year. It will be interesting to see what happens this year. But it does make life very easy when you underestimate and then come in with additional revenue so that you can do whatever you want with it.

I turn to my own electorate of Light and how this budget will affect it. For some time now, the governing council, the parents of Roseworthy Primary School and I have been calling for a solid school building. About four years ago we had to demolish the old solid building because of asbestos in the ceiling and the cracking of the building that was causing dust to fall. We looked at underpinning, which was not worthwhile because the building was too old, so we had to push it over. That was replaced by a transportable building which was, at any time, going to be short-term.

In fact, in my last budget as minister for education I had the replacement of a solid building at Roseworthy Primary School planned for, from memory, the year 2003-04. Unfortunately, in this budget it still does not appear. Teachers and students at Roseworthy Primary School are struggling in the building that they have because it is one long, transportable building split into about four different areas with people going through each area. For instance, you have the administration area and the entrance to the school, the library, the principal's office and the classroom in that building. There are doors on both sides, and it ends up being a thoroughfare because there is only a concertina door in places, making it very difficult for teachers to teach. That is the why I have been calling on this government and the Minister for Education to supply a solid building for the school—so that there can be a reasonable place in which to teach the children of Roseworthy Primary School. The only solid building they have is the better brick dunnies.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Well, as the member for MacKillop says, at least if there is a gale we can be sure that the dunnies will still be standing. However, I think that is particularly disappointing, because every other school in my electorate has a solid building, and Roseworthy deserves the same to enable it to continue the standard of teaching in that school.

The other disappointing issue is the North Para River. Plans have been going on for some years, commenced under our government, for a retention dam of the North Para River. The reason is that about once every 10 years a flood occurs in the Para and Gawler rivers system. The last one, I think I am right in saying, was in 1991 or 1992 and caused \$10 million damage in the lower reaches of the Gawler River. The Hon. Lynn Arnold was the Premier at the time, and a report was produced for him. Given the fact that the government has that report and that knowledge, the legal advice that I have is that any government is now legally responsible if another flood occurs.

The estimates for the retention dam when we first started was somewhere around \$8 million to \$9 million. All the engineering drawings and estimates have been done for the building of the dam wall and purchasing of property, and that project is now costed at \$17 million. It is very expensive, I agree, but the fact is that if Gawler has another flood there will be far more than \$10 million worth of damage in the lower reaches of the Gawler River; and this government, if it does not do something about it, will be liable. If I was one of the people who owned property in the lower reaches and my property was damaged, I certainly would be taking legal action against the government, given that it has the knowledge provided in 1992 that flood mitigation work needs to be undertaken. It is disappointing that the government has not stepped in here, because the local councils are at full stretch with all the funds that they have committed, and the federal government has said it is waiting for the state government to commit and will match its funding to ensure that this is built. So, we are waiting on the state government, but silence is all that we hear.

I see that in the state government's housing plan there is to be a feasibility study of the area of the Peachey Belt and Munno Para West in terms of the housing development that will go on in there. While that is good to see on one hand, I would have liked, on the other hand, to see some funds committed to this area, because these people have been hanging out for 20 to 30 years—and governments of both persuasions have not done the right thing by the people in this area. It is desperately in need of Housing Trust regeneration. If you drive through, there are places that you would struggle to believe were in Adelaide. Some houses have been demolished because they have been so badly damaged, and there are other houses whose windows are boarded up, with no-one living in them because they have been so badly damaged.

Millions of dollars need to go into this area to improve the outlook and the self-esteem of the people in this area, and it is disappointing to see that a dollop of money has not been allocated in the budget to commence this work right now. We all know it has to be done: it is not a case of making up our mind as to whether or not it needs to be done. The Playford Council put aside some \$800 000 a few years ago to work with the government to commence this project, and still nothing is there. We have a feasibility study but no action. What comes out of the feasibility study we will have to wait and see, but before the government acts on it, it could be another three or four years, so the poor people of the Peachey belt will have been waiting for 30 or 35 years rather than getting something done now.

Going back to the roads, there is one point that I forgot to mention, and that is the amount of money that we are spending on 48 red light cameras. I wonder whether that is the right way to go. We are spending millions of dollars on red light cameras. I see people run red lights every day and I do not deny it is needed, but it is a question of priority. A lot of our crashes occur on country roads, and one of the reasons that crashes occur is the condition of those roads. Therefore, should you be looking at putting money into those regional roads or should you be putting money into red light cameras? If it were me, I would be putting it into regional roads, because that is where the majority of our deaths are occurring.

Finally, the \$150 power concession that is being given to pensioners is an admission by this government. It is saying 'Sorry, we can't reduce power prices; we've thrown up the white flag. What we said at the last election on our pledge

card isn't true and it's never going to happen, but here is 150 bucks before the election and we hope that you will think better of us at the election. We have given you some respite but, after the election, we will be back to normal.' That just shows that the words of the Treasurer before the last election were not worth the paper they were written on.

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

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. I.P. LEWIS (Hammond): It is my good fortune to be able to participate in this debate on the budget brought in by the government, the last it will bring in before the election. I pondered for a time as to what I would use to preface my remarks in a way that would enable people to relate to them. I thought perhaps the easiest way to do it would be under three headings: the good, the bad and the ugly. I thought I ought to start on a happy note by referring to the good things. With the Minister for Health present, I have to acknowledge the commitment made by the government to the Murraylands in the Hills Mallee Southern Region to the upgrade of the hospital in Murray Bridge.

Whilst it is true that the former minister made a commitment to some improvements in that hospital, they were nowhere near as much as the commitment given by this government and this minister in the extensive nature of them—and that is for very good reason, because the moment they are finished, they will be inadequate. At present, as the minister responsible for planning and infrastructure will know, a development is on foot in the Murray Bridge area that will increase the number of jobs in what South Australians call the Lower Murray by 3 500, which will expand the population by something like 8 000 at least. We expect that expansion to have occurred before we have finished the construction work on the hospital.

The aim of the hospital is to provide the regional centre for the delivery of health care in the Murraylands (even though it is on the western edge of the Murraylands) for the current population, with an increase of 5 per cent. Instead of that, it is going to be an increase of the order that you had in your electorate of Fisher, sir, in the 1994 election. In the time between the electoral redistribution and that election, the population in Fisher had expanded to almost 32 000, whereas the smallest seat, in terms of numbers of electors at that time, was 100 less than 16 000 in the electorate represented by Bud Abbott. Clearly, what had happened was that things had got completely out of whack in the eight years, with one electorate being double the size of another. To your credit, you are still here and, what is more, you are Speaker and you are to be congratulated for your elevation to that office, sir.

I am also pleased to note that there has been some loosening in the attitude of the Native Vegetation Council, though perhaps not so much amongst its bureaucracy and the supporting bureaucracy elsewhere, in that they have allowed, for the first time in the history of the state, some offsetting replanting to occur on about 10 times the area that is involved where some remnant single trees have been removed from some excellent sandy soils suitable for irrigated horticulture in the Mallee area on the Murraylands just east of the river near Wall Flat (within 12 kilometres). Centre pivots can now operate where they could not before. The benefit to the river and to the environment is enormous in consequence of that arrangement.

The trees which are to be removed would be dead in no time, anyway. Isolated trees like that in the middle of a

paddock do not have a history of living for very long—four, at the most, five decades is the longest. These trees were already on the way out. They will go. They were left there just because they were big by comparison with the trees around them at the time of clearing, and were thought to provide shade. Their having been left there, it became unlawful to remove them. Now, some measure of common-sense is prevailing, and the area to be planted is an enormous increase in the area that would be covered by those isolated trees that are to be removed to enable more efficient and sustainable production to be undertaken, and that is to be commended.

The water licences are now being issued, albeit very, very late in the piece for those people who lived on and made their living from the swamps where the dairy industry was established on the Lower Murray. Whilst that is at once something good, it is also something bad, and I will come to that in a minute. There are accredited wetlands (10 of them, in fact) in the river, but not many of them are in my electorate. There is only one, as far as I am aware, that is to be given an allocation of water so that they can remain flooded, with some accounting for the quantity of water that evaporates from the free water surface put into the equation to work out how much water is being lost by having wetlands there. Indeed, the amount of water lost from the surface of the lagoons, or wetlands—call it what you like—is not a lot different from the amount of water required for irrigated pasture if you are to optimise production from the pasture with the amount of water put on it. Indeed, you would use more water if you tried to maximise production from that, but you would be doing so by adding additional units of water without getting an incremental increase in the quantity of forage grown from each additional unit of water added.

The next item I wish to draw attention to under the heading 'good' is, of course, boats now getting access to the Murray mouth. It was an absolutely ridiculous and stupid position which the government had taken when it dredged the mouth. Why did it dredge the mouth if it was not to provide access to the Coorong and the lakes? What else requires access besides boats? Sure, fish require access, but the fish cannot get through anyway, because there is no water flowing, so the barrages are not open. The fish cannot get into the estuarine lakes to do what they do there. Without wanting to offend some of the more sensitive members of the chamber, let me say that they spill their milt and, of course, that it is fertilised and they reproduce. That is as far as I will go on that other than to remark on the fact that we now have a scheme whereby we are going to install some of the barrages that can be opened and closed quickly to take advantage of high spring tides enabling fish, once they get in there close to where the barrages are, to swim straight through the gap and into the lakes and do their thing, as fish are wont to do.

I am pleased that, at long last, rehabilitation has begun on the Lower Murray swamps. It is a tragedy that the pig-headed members—not all of them, of course, but there are a few who are pig-headed amongst those irrigators on the lower Murray swamps—would not listen to the need for research into how best to utilise the water and the soil on those swamps with irrigation in the production of fodder. Notwithstanding that, the rehabilitation is beginning. It has, indeed, begun in the last 12 months, but it will now get away apace.

I am pleased, and I end in complimenting the same minister as when I began in terms of the increase that there seems to be—although it is not clear from the figures: it is

stated in the program—for the Country Patients Assisted Travel Scheme (CPATS). Having mentioned those things that I see as being good in their effect on the communities which I represent, may I refer to another one that affects not only the people I represent but people who love country music around South Australia. The Minister for the Arts, the people advising the Minister for the Arts and the Minister Assisting the Minister for the Arts have decided to give back to country music the amount of money which it is getting, and which it still needs to get, from other sponsorship such as was available through health and so on, where we undertook, in terms of country music, not to advertise or to accept sponsorship from tobacco companies or the liquor companies promoting alcohol consumption.

I commend the Premier for his air warfare destroyer efforts. I always believed that we would succeed in that respect, and I said so more than 12 months ago. I think that it is good that the Minister for Agriculture has noted that there will be a necessity for help for farmers—particularly young farmers who have only recently sought to buy land and take up farming—as a consequence of the impact of the drought thus far.

I also commend the member for Colton for his remarks about South Australia's icons, our jetties. There is no other state that has so many jetties as we have per capita, and they are an important part of our recreational activities and our tourism industry around the coastline. They were put there to enable the ketches to move properly between the communities on the coast, to which produce was brought for loading to go to Port Adelaide for exporting overseas. Even back in the days of windjammers, in many instances those jetties serviced deep enough water to enable vessels to come in and load, and get off to the European markets with their grain and whatever.

The bad thing is that insufficient commonsense is being used in the broomrape eradication program, where the amount of money to be expended over the next 13 years is greater than the amount of money that ought to be spent in the first two wet years we have from this point forward in the use of pine oil as a soil sterilant. We need to get hold of a secondhand CAT 12 grader and equip it with the necessary items that can lift the soil, stones, cowpats, twigs and branches there may be wherever broomrape infestation occurs, segregate the lumpy bits from the good soil, spray the lumpy bits as they are rolled over a table on the top (such as occurs with potato harvesting), spray the sterilant into the soil, mix it with a slowly rotating rotary hoe, leaving it then rolled down and compacted behind with small grooves in it so that water will run into it and the wind will not allow it to blow, and place in the grooves seeds that will grow and hold the soil quickly. If we did that, we would be getting somewhere, and we would be making sense. As it stands at present, we are going to keep doing research and wasting the opportunity to eradicate it, to which this government committed itself in the compact of good government. That is a botch; that is bad.

I refer to bus services in provincial cities: whereas we have given Mount Gambier a free one, we have made no provision to do anything equal of that kind in all the other provincial cities, including Murray Bridge, and that is just not fair. It is not acceptable. Indeed, we will lose our bus services in Murray Bridge, and similar places like Port Augusta and Port Lincoln, and we probably have a greater need, because the average per capita income is lower in our city than it is in Mount Gambier.

There is the problem of people who are on land that was sold to them by the Monarto Commission, an issue that was not properly addressed by the former ministers of water resources and infrastructure or by this government's minister. They were told that they would have a reticulated water supply put onto the land that they bought from the commission at the time it sold off those assets. Yet the government has now reneged on that, and there are ministerial seals on those documents. I fail to see how the government can honestly deny its obligation in that regard.

I am also annoyed that I have discovered another bad feature: without their consent, the power bills of ordinary households are being transferred from AGL—which has contract obligations under transfer of assets—to Origin Energy, which does not have them but, in the main, the householders do not know it. I have told those of them who have come to me, 'Tell Origin to go to hell. You do not have a contract with them, so do not pay their bloody bill,' and they have not. So, Origin can go and sing for its supper, and I am making it public at this point. I think it is outrageous that neither the Liberal Party nor the government has drawn attention to this inadequacy.

Unfortunately, there is a cut in the total of the budget of the Hills/Mallee Southern region. Where we need \$61.7 million for our overall health care delivery, we are going to get only \$58.2 million, and I think that that is ridiculous. For a Treasurer to simply deny that that amount of money is necessary to look after an increasingly ageing population is ridiculous in the extreme.

I am also annoyed that the TAB in Murray Bridge is being closed. That is bad. The provisions which could have been, and should have been, invoked in the transfer of the TAB when it was sold off ought not to have allowed that to occur. So, you are going to have to go into a pub in Murray Bridge if you want to lay a bet, regardless of whether or not you have been an alcoholic. I am also annoyed by the fact that a government minister has control over electorate office staff and electorate office provisions. That is ridiculous. It is a constitutional nonsense. No minister ought to be allowed to control such things.

Let us look at the ugly. There is the Karoonda Road—it is worse than the Vomitron and it is worse than the Wasleys to Roseworthy College Road—between Wynarka and Karoonda. It is an appalling piece of road that will make any sound person's stomach turn to the point where many become sick. The Minister for Infrastructure has refused to put a safe roundabout on the intersection of the Karoonda Road with the Murray Bridge to Mannum Road at Burdett, and there will be more people killed there. It will be on his head.

Another matter that worries me is the increasing waiting lists for elective surgery: there is now a list that you go on before you get onto the waiting list. Attention has been drawn to that in this house, and it affects country people more so than city people for the obvious reasons.

Nowhere near enough money is being allocated for the development of the infrastructure for STEDS. It is going to take us 35 years to provide STEDS in what are seen to be essential features for the drainage of waste water from homes in towns the size of Karoonda and other towns along the river, to stop those seepage waters from getting back into the river itself. Even now, there is not sufficient funding to provide homes for the disabled and the disadvantaged.

I am still distressed at the stupidity of the current government, which does not seem to understand that spending money on sterilising koalas to save the gum trees on

Kangaroo Island will not work. What does it think the bloody koalas do to the gum trees? They eat the leaves, they do not copulate with them. In any event, the government ought to know that bull koalas are very promiscuous. You can sterilise 79 others, but one bull koala will well and truly service 80 females and, as a consequence, there will be no reduction in the rate of reproduction. So, it is an exercise in futility. The koalas are not interested in the knot holes in the trunks; they are interested in the leaves. It is about time that the government came to its senses on that point and stopped wasting money.

More particularly, before my time expires, can I say how distressed I am at the claims being made by the daily paper circulating in this city and state that calls itself *The Advertiser*. It was not the staff but the deliberate editorial policy of the newspaper that vilified me for a month and set out to remove me from the office of Speaker, to which you have now ascended, Mr Speaker. It stated that I was making the parliament of South Australia a national laughing stock and that people everywhere were calling for my removal. I check the media daily, and I have to tell you, Mr Speaker, that I could find not one reference in the major daily newspapers circulating in the other states and territories to what *The Advertiser* stated was my inept and inappropriate stewardship of my role. So, they were telling lies, and that is very unfortunate for them. It was reckless, malicious and unprofessional, and it is the kind of level to which it has stooped—God knows for whatever reason, other than that they must be in collusion with the government in its desire to see me out of that office for whatever agenda it may have in doing so. However, I do not go lightly or easily, and I thank the house for its attention to my entreaties.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I move:

That this bill be referred to estimates committees.

The Hon. R.G. Kerin: We all look forward to that process.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Yes; I am delighted by the leader's enthusiasm for this process.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council requesting that the Minister for Industry and Trade (Hon. P. Holloway), the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (Hon. T.G. Roberts) and the Minister for Emergency Services (Hon. C. Zollo), members of the Legislative Council, be permitted to attend and give evidence before the Estimates Committees of the House of Assembly on the Appropriation Bill.

Motion carried.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I move:

That the house note grievances.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): One does not always get a second crack at talking about a bill before the house, but the Appropriation Bill is one that deserves a second shot. I will start by talking about the way in which this budget is so disappointing in relation to the infrastructure of the state. For quite a while, there has been much talk in South Australia about the need for strategic investment in infrastructure. Over the last couple of years, the government has experienced huge blowouts in revenue, but we have seen an absolute lack of reinvestment of those

windfall gains into infrastructure. In fact, during the second reading debate, I quoted some figures which show that, over the next four years, South Australia will spend only 18 or 20 per cent of the amount to be spent on infrastructure by Western Australia, which has a very similar revenue base. So, we are being left behind—and left behind very badly.

For three years, we waited for the promised infrastructure plan. Various excuses were made, but there was no shortage of people to tell us that we had not seen the plan because it was going in and out of cabinet like a yoyo and that it was being sent back to find what were described to me as 'sexy projects' to make it acceptable to the South Australian public. That resulted in some of the greatest ad hoc action ever seen. It is not at all an integrated document; in fact, it is so disintegrated that, six weeks after its release, the future tramline was running in a different direction than was initially planned. Also, the much awaited desalination plant on Eyre Peninsula was replaced with a pipeline, costing \$45 million, to take more water out of the River Murray to the Eyre Peninsula.

This is the fourth budget handed down by this government. Every one of the first three budgets included funding for that desalination plant but, every year, it has failed to get moving. Not that long ago, when I asked the Minister for Administrative Services about the status of the project, he said that it was in the budget for this year. Yet the infrastructure plan talked about looking at the options, and desalination was one of those options. Out of the blue, comes a pipeline that will take water out of the River Murray to supplement the water on the West Coast. For the last three years, that area has been promised a desalination plant. What really worries me is that, because this government will not get off its backside and build a desalination plant, it is assuming that the desalination plant being scoped by Western Mining will go ahead.

If that does not come off—and there is no certainty; even the government's press release about the pipeline said that it 'could' happen—what we may have in the long-term is Eyre Peninsula hooked up to the Murray. If we go ahead and build a desalination plant on the West Coast, we will have \$45 million worth of pipeline basically sitting there achieving virtually nothing or extremely little. So, that is a major cause for concern. It shows how the minister has not been able to get his department to do the government's wishes. My understanding is that there are a few people within SA Water who have a philosophical opposition to the building of a desalination plant; they are about selling water and making money, but after the arm wrestling has gone on for three years, finally, SA Water (who love to build pipelines to take water out of the Murray and sell it) have won the day; they have rolled the government and received \$45 million to build a pipeline which may have no future whatsoever.

I mentioned the tramline. The minister stated in the house that he could not answer any questions about it. This was the worst kept secret in Adelaide, because people from within the department had been forced into bringing this up and had actually leaked it. We asked the minister whether a study had been done on the impact of traffic on King William Street if a tramline was installed, and he said that he did not know whether an impact study had been done. How ministers can sit around a cabinet table and decide to put two tramlines (one each way) down King William Street between Victoria Square and North Terrace and not even know whether there has been a traffic impact study done shows how hungry the

government was for the sexy headline about a tramline extension.

Between, say, 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. the traffic on King William Street is bedlamic, and they want to take away one lane each way. They will have to introduce a turning cycle at the lights for the trams to go down to the railway station. The minister also did not know about the strategic plan target of doubling public transport. If you increase public transport, the only way of getting through the middle of the city is by going down King William Street. It will be an absolute mess. Then the Premier, because he had a ride on a tram in Portland in the USA—we are not too sure how many people back there knew about this—despite the fact that for three years they had worked on an infrastructure plan and had come up with this wonderful idea of bringing the tram around to the Adelaide railway station, he thought the publicity was not too bad on that, so they decided to extend the tram to North Adelaide as well. That was not in the infrastructure plan. After three years of bouncing the infrastructure plan around in the Public Service and in and out of cabinet, it was changed all of a sudden and another heap of millions of dollars was thrown at it.

There has also been the announcement about the tunnels on South Road. That is not an integrated solution. There will be some major problems on South Road, one of which will be the enormous amount of traffic that will now be generated by the development at Adelaide Airport; not just the terminal but also the IKEA development, and the Harbor Town expansion. This will mean that there will be a lot more east-west traffic between the airport and the city. How that traffic is going to get across South Road without there being a tunnel somewhere in that region beggars belief. As has been said, the tunnel will just help people to get from one traffic jam to another. The minister could not answer questions about what he is going to do about the tramline on South Road. There will be traffic from one way coming over an overpass at that tramline and traffic coming the other way through a tunnel. How he is going to manage that traffic no-one knows.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: Always knocking.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The minister says that we are always knocking but, unless we can advise you guys, because you don't know much about these things, you will never solve the problems. We are just alerting you to some of the problems that are there. The fact that the infrastructure plan fails to address one of the biggest problems facing regional South Australia at the moment, the roads system in the South-East, is an absolute disgrace. Anyone with one finger on the pulse in connection with infrastructure needs in South Australia would realise that the freight task in the South-East of South Australia is growing at an enormous rate because of what is happening with the timber industry. That will mean a doubling of the freight task in the South-East.

The roads are worn, no money has been spent on them for the last few years, and there is a desperate need to upgrade or build new roads to carry out that task. What will happen down there is very worrying. There is the economic problem of how to get the timber to the wharves, but there is also an enormous problem for the local citizens in terms of amenities and safety. That is one thing which is absolutely missing from this plan. They need to make some decisions. They need to decide what they are going to do about the railway line.

Ms White: What would you do?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The first thing you do is sort out what you are going to do about the railway line. You don't just sit on your hands.

Ms White: What do you want to do?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Whatever the locals want to do. You have to talk to the locals about the solution. The first problem you have to solve is the railway line. Because the government is not interested in building the railway line, if I was a local I would say, 'Forget the railway line, because you're not going to help us.' Once you get rid of the problem of the railway line you can then make a decision as to whether you go with the Border Road—if you do that you have to put some east-west roads in—or you upgrade the Riddoch Highway. You have two options, but you cannot decide on those options until the government makes a decision about what it is going to do about rail. The government needs to make some decisions.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Taylor and the minister are out of order.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I know what I am going to do, but that will not make any difference at the moment.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The house is becoming disorderly.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Maybe it will make a difference, because we will be back in government and you still won't have done a thing.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The three wise people on my right will keep quiet.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: That's right, sir; they are badgering me something shocking. That was not picked up in the regional infrastructure plan, which was released while we were in Mount Gambier. They knew it was a dud. What did they do? They hid it. We did not get a copy, not one copy between the whole opposition. The government wanted to have a couple of days of talking without showing us what a crock it actually was. There was nothing in it. It was not going to have a regional infrastructure plan either. It was only after a question was asked in this place that they cobbled it together. They made quick calls, and many of them had spoken to me. A call went to the councils and the regional development boards, and they all said that what was needed was put in there. It was not about how we were going to do it but what the needs are, and that was it. It really annoyed us, because a fair few of us actually care about what happens in regional South Australia. I do not know of any of my members who have been able to get hold of a hard copy of that regional infrastructure plan. We have had to go and find it on the web site. The Minister for Agriculture, the local member in Mount Gambier, told us in Mount Gambier that the reason we did not have it was that they had posted it. Posting it, when we were in Mount Gambier, was a wonderful idea. He must have posted it in Mount Gambier, because it still has not turned up.

An honourable member: Snail mail.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: We are still waiting. As the member said, I think they put it on snail mail; so, we are still waiting for that. The other issue—and the member for Hammond spoke earlier tonight about this—is the Lower Murray rehabilitation scheme. I see that that gets a mention or two again. What an absolute disaster! What has happened to those dairy farmers is just not fair. The government changed the goal posts a couple of times. I saw it mentioned the other day as a \$22 million project. It was a \$40 million project initially, but the government has transferred more of the costs back to the farmers and, basically, it has reduced its

own spending on it. We have seen SA Water go in, buy water and, basically, a lot of people have left the land, but SA Water has been in there just grabbing water licences left, right and centre. Who knows what it will do with those? Perhaps that is the water that is going to go to the West Coast, which will also take it out of the river between Morgan and Murray Bridge. How that is a good environmental outcome, I have absolutely no idea.

The other plan that the government has had is the State Strategic Plan. The Economic Development Board, with Robert Champion de Crespigny and the Premier, agrees that its budgets were going to be based on the State Strategic Plan and how you spend the money to meet the targets within the plan. The other day I issued a bit of a challenge to the EDB to come out and comment on how it would score this budget against meeting those targets within the State Strategic Plan. I fail to find the relevance. It just seems to me to have been totally and absolutely ignored, and I invite members opposite, if they have a copy, to have a look at the State Strategic Plan. Get it out—it is probably still in the envelope, but get out the State Strategic Plan—have a look at its targets and tell me how the targets in there are in any way relevant to the way that this government has allocated the money within the budget this year. It just does not seem to come within cooe.

The other issues over the last couple of days are to do with the ships. It is fantastic news for South Australia today. It is fantastic news also in a way for Victoria and Western Australia. The Victorians are disappointed but there is a lot of work. The federal government has basically made the strategic decision to build these ships in Australia, and it is great for Australia and good for South Australia to get a damn good share of it. However, because they are building here, I think that all of southern Australia will win. It is good to see us right at the top of it. However, we have to make sure that we do not sit on our hands. There are other industries out there that we have to attack, get on with and try to do something about, and we have to try to build those other industries, because anyone who is following what is going on in the world at the moment will understand the sorts of challenges which South Australia faces over the next decade in the manufacturing and car industries, amongst others. This is not the endgame; this is not the one that is absolutely going to assure our future. It will certainly help but we need other industries as well. I will leave my comments at that and look after my voice.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Ms RANKINE (Wright): I commence by congratulating the Premier and his team on winning the \$6 billion air warfare destroyer contract for South Australia.

Members interjecting:

Ms RANKINE: Well, certainly; I am very happy to acknowledge that the Prime Minister made the right decision, and this is a decision that is wonderful for South Australia. It did not happen because of a bit of good luck. Enormous amounts of work have gone into preparing and sustaining this bid for South Australia and, as the Premier said, it was against some extremely strong competition. All those involved deserve the congratulations of this house. It is pleasing to see the federal government use some good sense for once. It is a contract that will challenge our industries and our work force, but they are clearly up to that challenge. We will have something like 3 000 direct and indirect jobs in relation to the construction of these destroyers, so this is the

biggest boost to South Australia's economy that has occurred in my time in this place.

It was really pleasing to see the reports on the television news tonight and the enthusiasm of those people down at Port Adelaide whose jobs were, in effect, on the line. It was also pleasing to see the hoots of joy from members opposite. They were really pleased this afternoon when the Premier announced it. We could see faces of real thunder over there—very typical of them, not caring about South Australian industry and South Australian jobs, but more about themselves. This contract will well and truly put South Australian skills and enterprise on the map, and I am sure that, at this stage, we cannot even imagine the potential spin-offs from this contract that will go for some time into the future. Again, my congratulations go to the Premier and his people who worked on this contract. It was a lot of hard work over a number of years; it is really pleasing for all South Australians.

Just briefly, I want to go over some of the initiatives under the budget, particularly in relation to our children and their future development. The Premier's Reading Challenge was one of the great innovations last year, and it is pleasing to see more funds going into it this year. The initial target was something like 50 per cent of schools being involved by the year 2006, and already we have well and truly exceeded that target with a total of 70 per cent. A new target of 75 per cent has been set for this year for government and non-government schools participating in the school reading challenge. I have had the privilege of attending a number of primary schools in my electorate and, most significantly, Keller Road Primary School, which is a small but very dynamic school. Only a couple of weeks ago the Premier visited Madison Park Primary School to give some early bird awards to children who have already met their target of 12 books this year and to encourage them to continue.

Certainly, the School Pride money has injected an enormous amount of pride in our public schools, particularly in Salisbury East—schools that were neglected over a number of years by the former government. Some \$25 million is going into that program. This year, Salisbury East High School celebrates its 40th anniversary and the opening of the first major infrastructure upgrade in that school's history. I well remember the member for Taylor (the then minister for education) coming out and announcing the funding for that upgrade and the jubilation throughout the whole school community. They really could not believe what they were hearing.

There are also the initiatives in relation to children's development, those early years, with our ministers across government working together to ensure the best possible life outcomes for our babies. We know that children learn more in the first two years of their life than they do at any other stage, and the Minister for Health, the Minister for Education and Children's Services and the Minister for Families and Communities are working together to ensure that that happens and that we have measures in place to support our families to ensure that our children do, in fact, achieve those best outcomes. Two new family centres currently are being established and another eight will be established throughout the year. They are great innovations for our children here in South Australia.

I also wish to talk very briefly about bogus community organisations. I want to issue a warning to people in my electorate about bogus organisations, which purport to be community organisations, establishing themselves. I have

already seen an indication that this is happening, so I want to let people know that there are some unscrupulous people out there who are happy to set up organisations with an intent that is quite different from what they say publicly. They might use the title 'community association' and purport that they are working for the local area but, in fact, that is not the case at all. It is very easy for individuals to set up these bogus organisations. They can come along and say that they are from such and such a community organisation and they want to help you do whatever it is. People need to look at what these people are saying and ask themselves: what does this person really want; what really is the motivation behind what they are doing? Clearly, in many instances, it is not about the community.

Genuine organisations can show minutes of meetings, office holders, times and dates of their meetings and the sorts of things in which they have been involved and what they have done for the community. Bogus organisations cannot show that. They are setting themselves up, and I am issuing a very serious and strong warning to my community. If anyone has any doubts about bogus organisations in my community I encourage them to contact my office, because we would be happy to investigate those groups and report back to the constituent or to the community at large through my newsletter. We know they are out there. I can let those people who are working those organisations up know that we are keeping a very watchful eye on them. I will not allow my community to be duped. They are on notice: if someone sets up a bogus organisation and comes out and claims that they are doing something they are not, we will expose them. It is a very timely warning, I think, for people out in my electorate—

Ms Chapman: It would be if we knew what you were talking about.

Ms RANKINE: I am telling you that there are people who set up bogus organisations—

Ms Chapman: Report them to the Minister for Consumer Affairs.

Ms RANKINE: Well, that is right.

Ms Chapman: Have you?

Ms RANKINE: No, well, I am just telling you that we are keeping a watchful eye on them, and as soon as they make themselves public or start to dupe the community we will expose them. That is my warning in this house today to those people. We will not tolerate it in my community. Those people will be exposed. They just need to be very careful about claiming who and what they are and what they are doing.

Dr McFetridge: Name them.

Ms RANKINE: Thank you, member for Morphett. I will name them when and if it is appropriate. At this stage, I am telling my community to be very careful and do not be duped. If someone knocks on a person's door claiming to be from a particular organisation, they should make sure they check it out. If they have doubts, they should give me a ring and we would be happy to do it for them.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): A closer examination of the budget as published by the Treasurer last Thursday reveals two important aspects about which I wish to alert the house, in particular, in relation to the education budget. The first matter relates to inflation of the figures and the second relates to deliberate concealment of information in respect of the maintenance requirements of government schools. Let me turn to the former. For the first time, in this financial year—

2004-05—the budget estimates include and recognise the general school revenue and expenditure.

Essentially, that has the effect of bringing into account the treatment of government schools as government-controlled bodies, and I take no issue with that. It has the effect of increasing the amount of revenue and expenditure in the budget estimates in the forthcoming financial year to the extent of \$114 million, and that is made up of two areas. One area is the schools' revenue that includes their school fees (the materials and services charge which they charge parents), excursion fees, computer levies, camp fees and the like, amounting to \$61.5 million. The second area is what is received in canteen revenues, fundraising by the schools and the hire of facilities by the schools to third parties. That, on the budget figures, discloses some \$52 million of that \$114 million.

So, the gross amount which the Treasurer proudly announced last week was to be included in the expenditure by this government in respect of education is \$114 million of money raised or paid for by parents in each of the school communities that we all have in our electorates: that amount is added in. The text of the budget explains that that money is directly expended again, so no net amount of money is accumulated. It is expended by the schools but is brought into these books of account. Notwithstanding that there is some explanation when you delve into the budget in relation to that, the budget profile in relation to the graph on this matter discloses an 11.1 per cent increase in expenditure in respect of education. What is then discovered is that if you take out the \$114 million of parents' money—not state or commonwealth government money or any other revenue: it is the parents' money—you are down to a 6 per cent increase.

Why that is so important to appreciate is that we go from 11.1 per cent to 6.1 per cent (and I want to be clear about the actual figure), which means that when we look at the comparison between what was spent as the estimate in this financial year and what is budgeted for in the next financial year, we see that it is not 11.1 per cent but an amount from budget to budget of 6.1 per cent. More importantly, in real figures, because of course they have added in the amount for this financial year as well, we are left with an actual increase of \$65 million in total.

That leads to some explanation as to why it is then necessary for the government to slash the capital works for education from \$97 million, which was there at the time the former education minister was coming into office in the 2001-02 year (she did cut it back a bit, I must admit, but that is the level that was there under the previous government), to \$47 million in this budget. The reason is simply that the government is engaged in enterprise bargaining negotiations with the Australian Education Union to deal with the new arrangements for teachers over the forthcoming three years, and all that is entirely proper. However, it means that what we actually see is that for any modest accommodation of an enterprise bargaining agreement all that money, and more than what has been allocated by this budget, is needed to enable a commitment to any modest increase in the enterprise bargaining agreement. So what suffers, of course, is capital works, and we have seen that plummet.

The second thing that is important in relation to this—and all members ought to be aware of this, Mr Speaker, including yourself—is the other staggering revelation in this budget that the Building Lands Asset Management System, via the internet web site, discloses to all of us the outstanding maintenance requirements of schools, and sometimes they are

\$300 000, \$400 000 or \$500 000—it was \$800 000 for one school I looked up recently in Mount Gambier—of outstanding maintenance. What is disclosed, after the expenditure of some \$10 million, is the introduction of the new Strategic Asset Management Information System (SAMIS). I do not take any issue with the importance of that system; it might be a better one and have a better functionality, and it might be of more use to the government in its planning. All of that is disclosed in the budget as being an important improvement in relation to the data that is available for proper planning of the maintenance of the \$1.6 billion worth of assets that we have in this state's public schools. That is fine, but we find that this new system, when it comes into effect—and it has been on line from 2 April—is a secret system. The BLAMS system is accessible to anyone: anyone can go onto the web site and find out what is outstanding in their local school. This system, the new one which became effective from 2 April this year, of course is a secret one. You are not allowed to get into it.

This government has decided, notwithstanding its open accountability mantra during the election and in the first year, particularly, when it introduced a number of bills into this house in suggesting that it was going to follow that, that now it is going to keep this information secret, not just from the members of parliament who represent these districts and the people in these communities and the schools that are wholly owned by this government and therefore the people of South Australia; but not one person in South Australia can have access to that information unless they get permission from the Department of Education and Children's Services.

It is an utter disgrace that this government should spend our money to conceal the very information that we need as members of the parliament to advise, support and represent our people, and that the members of the public deserve so that they may put the proper submissions to government as to the reasonable priorities of the essential maintenance of our schools in this state.

Mr RAU (Enfield): I was not going to get involved in this debate, but I have really enjoyed listening to all the contributions from the other side and thought it would be a shame if I did not say a few words, because it is such an important thing for the state that we have a sensible discussion about the budget, which is a very important annual state event. I hope that this year is the last year in which all of us are involved in estimates as we presently know them. I believe that you, Mr Speaker, share this view that estimates are a tedious exercise that could be greatly improved in some way that would give the parliament and its members some more useful way of dealing with this very important process of the annual state budget being subjected to appropriate scrutiny.

What I wanted to do more particularly is make a few observations about the many speeches I have heard from members opposite in the last couple of days. The very interesting thing about these speeches is that none of them seems to recognise that this government, in common with all other governments in all other countries in the world, so far as I am aware, does not have unlimited largesse to dispense to the community. That may come as a shock to some people, but it is unfortunately the truth: governments have limits to what they can do. Those limits are set basically by a fairly simple equation; that is, that you have to tax to get income before you can spend it, unless you want to go into debt.

I think everyone agrees that going massively into debt is not a good idea. Many governments around the world have

tried that and, with the exception of the American government presently, it does not seem to be doing them much good. The interesting thing about the remarks that we have heard opposite is that many people have talked about the GST and what a magnificent windfall the GST is and how the present state government was not in favour of the introduction of the GST in the first place.

That is a matter of public record: the Labor Party did not support the introduction of the GST. The fact is that the GST is there, it does return an income to the state, but that income would be returned to the state whether we had a Labor government, a Liberal government or government of any other persuasion. So, any debate about the GST is reasonably academic.

The second remark I heard on the taxing side of the ledger from some members opposite was that land tax is a tremendous grab by the state government and something needs to be done about land tax. What I would like to hear from one of the speakers on the other side—and hopefully we will hear it in the course of the 10-minute grieves—is exactly what they intend to do to further reduce land tax, by how much they will further reduce land tax and, applying the equation that you have to tax in order to spend, what programs they will be cutting as a result of their decision to further reduce land tax in South Australia.

The third area of revenue that I have heard spoken about by some members, including, I am certain, the member for Hartley, was payroll tax. Remarks were made about what a disgrace payroll tax was, the fact that payroll tax is a tax on jobs, and all those other remarks that all of us have heard many times. I have yet to meet a person in any political organisation anywhere in this country who says that payroll tax is a great thing. I have not found a single person who loves payroll tax, but the funny thing is that I have not found a single person who is going to do much about it, either, because the dreadful reality of the equation comes back to bite them on the bottom. That equation is simple: if you do not have the tax, you do not raise the money. If you do not have the money, you cannot spend it.

So I say to members opposite: by all means have a policy of reducing payroll tax, if that is your policy, but tell us, please, what you are going to do with payroll tax and tell us, please, what present programs you are going to reduce and to what extent in order to make up for the shortfall caused by the reduction in payroll tax. What I would like to hear more about in the course of the next 10-minute grieves—which I know are going to be more exciting than the 20-minute ones because the 20-minute ones allowed for a bit of padding, and even the member for Hartley padded his out a little bit. But the 10-minute grieves, I feel, are going to be very interesting and very exciting. I actually think that members of the opposition have been saving the best for last.

I remember when I was a young fellow we used to have fish and chips for dinner occasionally. I was in the habit of eating the chips and would never get round to the fish, and I remember my father on one occasion saying to my mother, 'Don't give him the chips: he has to finish the fish before he gets his chips.' I learned that you always save the best for last, and ever since then I have found that that tends to be what people do. To this day, I will always eat my potatoes last, because they are always the best bit. And I think that is what is happening here: they are saving the best for last.

I am expecting, in the 10 minute grieves we will be receiving over the next couple of days, that we will be hearing how much the opposition would reduce land tax, how

much it would reduce payroll tax and what present programs it will be cutting in order to balance the books as a result of those tax cuts. I am looking forward to that, because I think that will be a very interesting couple of days we have ahead of us. I would also like to know, leaving aside the question of the balance equation between expenditure and income, how we are going to fund the new schools we are being asked to fund.

I do not know which programs are to be cut. Assuming we are not going to change the taxation arrangements, I am very keen to hear in these 10 minute grieves if we are going to leave tax arrangements as they are. What program in the current expenditure program is going to be reduced or cut out in order to provide for the new schools? What program is presently going to be cut in order to provide for the new hospitals? What program is presently going to be cut back to provide for the new roads, whether it is at Roseworthy, in the Mallee, or wherever it is that we are looking for a new road? Which other program is going to be cut back? What other programs are going to be cut back in order to provide more teachers?

If, Mr Speaker, the answer is, as I suspect, that no identified program is going to be cut back, there are only two possibilities. Either the opposition is proposing an increase in the taxation burden on South Australia through one of the present taxes such as land tax or payroll tax, or through levies or other various means, or it is going to go into deficit with the budget. I think that we should hear a bit about that, too, because I am interested in whether it favours a deficit budget arrangement for the ongoing fiscal arrangements for the—

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order. The grievance debate is absolutely wide ranging, but all I have heard the member talking about is what he thinks we might do. I have not heard him actually introduce any subject at all.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order. The member for Enfield.

Mr RAU: I always know when I am making the member for Unley uncomfortable, sir, because that is when he pops up with a point of order which you dismiss immediately. I am obviously pressing a bruise, and I apologise if it is upsetting the honourable member, but I am looking forward to your 10 minute griever, because I believe you will be telling us which taxes you will be cutting, and which programs you will be cutting to afford the new roads, schools and education programs.

Aside from listening to the opposition, I have recently been reading, as I occasionally do in the chamber. I have just come across a very interesting little piece in a book that I am reading about Mr Franklin Eleanor Roosevelt who was, at one stage, president of the United States. As members will probably know, Franklin Roosevelt came into the position of president of the United States at a time when the economy was in deep trouble. In 1932 he was elected, and he took over in 1933. He remarked, according to this book, that, from his study of history, the more a president tried to do the more the people went on about his commissions and omissions. And he liked to tell them the story of Lincoln listening patiently to complaints and then saying:

Gentlemen, suppose all of the property that you were worth was in gold, and you put it in the hands of Blonden—

who was a famous trapeze walker—

to carry across the Niagara River on a rope. Would you shake the cable or keep shouting out to him, 'Blonden, stand-up a little straighter, stoop a little more, move a little faster, lean a little more to the south, lean a little more to the north,' or would you hold your

breath as well as your tongue, and keep your hands off until he was safe over?

I ask him that question.

Mr BROKENSHERE (Mawson): In the few minutes that I have now I would like to talk about my own electorate of Mawson, our community and what it has or has not got in this budget, and the southern suburbs. As the member who has always given credit where it is due, I am pleased to see that a couple of projects that we have been working on for some time are in the budget. First, I will talk about the McLaren Flat Primary School. As our community knows, many of us have worked with successive school councils to develop forward opportunities for upgrading the McLaren Flat Primary School, going right back to when we first bought the land from the council through the local sport and recreation grounds committee. In fact, that was the start of the vision for these upgrades.

I am pleased to see these upgrades are in the budget, but, as is typical of this government, it tends to announce projects and then not deliver. In fact, the McLaren Flat Primary School will not see any of the delivery of the four classroom units or administration unit until 2006-07. I do not know why it is taking them so long to get to it, but it does complete a project that we worked on as a community, and for that I am grateful, and I will be watching closely to ensure that there is no more time-lag with that project to complete it for our community. The Willunga Primary School is a different situation.

As the community is well aware, I was privileged to sit around the cabinet table when we approved the \$6 million for the Willunga Primary School and Preschool redevelopment. Unfortunately, and sadly, when this government came into office, it immediately stopped that and all other school program building works on the Fleurieu Peninsula, and delayed for several years that project proceeding, albeit that the money had been put forward. In the budget papers again we see the money there for this project. I understand that the contract is now about to be signed.

We have already seen our community's children miss out on three years of that upgrade. Some of those children have now left the school without any opportunity to enjoy that complex, which would have been completed this year, in fact, as per our Liberal government's plans, if this Labor government had not stopped it. A delay of three years is not acceptable. On behalf of our community, I have been more than patient, and I do not intend to be patient any longer with this project. Together with the community, we will be watching closely to ensure that no more nonsense occurs with the Labor government and that, indeed, that project is completed as soon as possible for the wellbeing of the students, parents and staff. I thank the students, parents and staff for their tolerance. I know they were not understanding about it; nor was I; nor should we have been. It was a disgrace that the government delayed this project for three years, and we will be watching it very closely to ensure that it is now built, and built as soon as possible.

There were two other projects for the south: mental health beds. Obviously we support that. It ties in with the work we did as a Liberal government where we spent multi million dollars on upgrading the accident and emergency section of the Noarlunga Hospital. Clearly, with the problems that this government has created through lack of support for mental health and talking about closing the Glenside dedicated mental health facility, they have to do something about extra

mental health beds. So I am happy with that, but, again, we do not see that project being started until 2007.

In the meantime, we have a lot of people who need mental health assistance who are not going to get it. I again say to the government that, when you are awash with money from the GST, when the Liberal government reduced the debt, got the economy growing and created the jobs, and with the enormous property tax benefits that this government has seen far above budget estimations—\$5 000 million more than projected over a four-year period, why again the delay?

Finally, I refer to the Christies Beach Police Station. I was privileged as police minister to be involved with the development and opening of the second stage of the Christies Beach Police Station. The third and final stage is referred to in the budget papers but, unfortunately, again there is not one dollar allocated for that in the forward year. Traditionally, you announce only projects that are going to have reasonable commitment in the forward year, in the next year. This government has a tendency to announce things four to eight years out. I would like to see that police station completed this year and, certainly, as shadow police minister and shadow southern suburbs minister, I will be ensuring that they do not let that get away, and not deliver for our police and our community.

They are the projects that I see as positives but, sadly, there is very little else in the budget for the southern suburbs at a time when we have massive expansion in suburbs such as Aldinga, Sellicks and Seaford Mews. There is next to nothing in the way of increased public transport services. There is a promised feasibility study into a railway line that they say is going to cost \$100 million to build just to go to Seaford. That is not satisfactory: it needs to go to Sellicks. I challenge why it would cost \$100 million just to build it to Seaford: \$100 million is about 70 per cent of the cost of building the whole Southern Expressway, which we built for \$132 million when in government. There is nothing to address night and weekend public transport services.

The government has announced a blowout in the tramline upgrade—the new tram capital works project—of \$13 million, which is for the upgrade from Glenelg to Victoria Square. It does not blink an eye at that. On top of that, it has put \$50 million into a proposed extension of the tramline from Victoria Square to the Hotel Adelaide. I must say that I am not opposed to extending tramlines and light rail, but let us get some priorities for the southern suburbs. Let us help the young people who badly need employment. Let us help the dads and the mums who want to be able to access TAFE, and shopping, educational and recreational facilities.

It is time that we delivered proper transport services to the outer southern area before we announce some grand plan—because it suits the Premier when he is overseas on a trip to get some media—to the tune of \$50 million for a project which is ill-conceived and has not been subjected to the base feasibility studies that should have occurred—at a time when we are seeing the south neglected. I was proud to be a part of a Liberal government that turned around the slogan of ‘the forgotten south’. Sadly, we are rapidly slipping back into becoming the forgotten south, and it is time that the government really got serious about delivering for the southern suburbs. On a daily basis I talk to people who are disappointed about the lack of support. All we tend to see are promises and lip service, with a study into the extension of art development and so on. Now that might be nice, and we all like art, but art does not put bread and butter on plates; art does not

fix the environmental degradation of our area; art does not do anything to address the dying seagrass in the gulf; art does not do anything to address the urgent remedial work that is needed on the cliffs all the way from Christies Beach right through to Sellicks; and art does not do anything to address community health services and other community social infrastructure that is desperately needed.

This government, in an ad hoc fashion, in a knee-jerk reaction to a media story in *The Sunday Mail* or *The Advertiser*, went ahead and let the Land Management Corporation sell off hundreds of hectares of land for housing. It makes a big profit out of that. I would guess that some of that land was purchased back when Sir Thomas Playford was the Premier—so it was purchased for a relatively minor amount of money. They are now getting millions and millions of dollars from the sale of that land, and we are seeing very little of that coming back into the southern suburbs. The community has had enough of that. People are not prepared to allow this government to get off with only promises and forward estimates funding promises without actually delivering. It has not got a good record. Nothing is being delivered other than the extension of roadworks that we had ongoing (such as Commercial Road) when we were in government. Under this budget, there are no new roadworks for the south. Yes, there is the continuation of the completion of Commercial Road, but this was funded and developed by the Liberal government.

At a time when we have significant traffic congestion in the south and at a time when we have not seen any major new capital works since the building of the expressway, it is deplorable to think that a government can be talking about spending \$20 million on supporting a few public servants into a university, extending a tramline just a few kilometres, and spending \$75 million on opening bridges for the Port River Expressway to please the Treasurer and the federal local member, yet the south has missed out. I intend to work continually and closely with my community and the broader southern community to ensure that our voice is heard. At the end of the day, the ultimate decision for our community, when we can raise our voices even louder because of the neglect that we have suffered from this government, will be on 18 March next year. I will be out there working with the community to ensure that the southern suburbs get better than they are receiving under the Labor government.

Time expired.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): It is my pleasure to make a few comments about the budget in respect of my electorate, which I did not have an opportunity to do in my second reading contribution. In looking at the budget, I first of all thought of Mylor Primary School. Mylor is a nice little town in my electorate that has a school with a sign that says, ‘Small school, great kids,’ and that is what I have right around the electorate. I have about 14 primary schools, from memory, nine kindergartens and one high school.

Poor old Mylor Primary School has been having some trouble, because it had plans for some pretty desperately needed refurbishments: it had not only very old buildings but the toilets were also way up the backyard and, as members would appreciate, it is pretty tough when youngsters have to wander a long way through dreadful weather in the middle of winter just to get to the toilet. Somehow the department managed to lose the Mylor Primary School’s application, and it seems to have been bounced around a fair bit. Sadly, I do not see any further funding for the school in this budget,

although I know that previous funding has been approved. A lot of it has been expended on putting in some new toilets.

The budget makes an allocation for the Aldgate Kindergarten relocation. It struck me as odd that the Aldgate Kindergarten relocation was included with an amount of \$400 000. Aldgate Primary School has some spare room, so the parent bodies of both Aldgate Kindergarten and Aldgate Primary School decided that it would be a good idea to relocate the kindergarten to the primary school site. That seemed to be a win-win situation, as it meant that, as most parents had older children at the primary school, it would be easier to deliver them to kindy and to school at the one location. Aldgate Kindergarten is located at the back of the shops in Aldgate, which is a fairly difficult location for a kindergarten. However, more importantly, it is in a commercial zone and, therefore, it could be sold off for a fairly good sum of money.

I should have thought this would be a positive outcome, even for the department, as the cost of relocation would be far less than the sum the department would receive from selling the property at the edge of a commercial zone in Aldgate, especially as the building for the kindergarten already existed and all that was required was some new fencing, new playground equipment, and so on. However, the amount that appears in the budget is \$400 000. In anyone's language, that is an enormous amount of money simply to relocate a kindergarten, when no new building is required, only fencing, and so on, and removing what is already on the Aldgate Kindergarten site up to the Aldgate Primary School site. This is just one of many examples I have discovered of this government's simply wasting money.

In relation to schools I congratulate the government on the new commercial skill centre opened a couple of weeks ago at Heathfield High School, which is the only high school in my electorate.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: And a great school it is!

Mrs REDMOND: I know that the member for Davenport and all his siblings attended the school. It is an excellent school with a great history of innovation. Of course, it is well known as a volleyball school, but it also has an excellent academic record, and it now has the commercial skills centre, where students will be able to undertake VET programs and be trained to the stage 3 TAFE certificate. Although I have not seen the commercial kitchens at Regency Park, I am told that this new commercial skills kitchen is as good as those at Regency Park. It will be a hub school for hospitality training in the Hills and Mallee area where, until now, this type of training has not been available.

The opening of the skills centre was attended by the members for Reynell, Kavel and I, as well as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who performed the official opening. It was one of the most joyful openings I have ever attended. In the hall, there was a display of all the different types of VET courses available, such as beauty treatment, automotive engineering, building, and so on. Horseracing is taught at Oakbank so, as part of the display, a horse was parked outside the hall of the school, where all the other courses were on display. The horse stood quite quietly until the speeches started, and they were made just adjacent to where the horse was standing behind a screen. As it happened, the Minister for Foreign Affairs had not seen behind the screen and did not know about the horse. However, when he got up to make his speech, the horse decided he would also contribute to the proceedings. Every time the minister said something, the horse would also make a very noisy contribution.

Eventually, the minister became quite puzzled about what a horse was doing there anyway, as he did not know that the VET program had a horseracing component at the Oakbank school. There was a great deal of fun. When the principal welcomed everyone—and she had a full two-page list of all the dignitaries, which included representatives from the architects, the builders and the various committees in the schools, as well as politicians—and when she got to the end of her list, that was when the horse made its presence first known by raising its voice, as if to say, 'Hey, you forgot me.' Anyway, that is enough about Heathfield High School.

As I said, I congratulate the government on having the good sense to fund that, with the federal government. It also had some funding from the community—in particular, the CWA. The CWA in Bridgewater closed in the last year or two and, rather than having the money go off into the general coffers of the CWA for distribution around the state, they made it clear that they wanted their money to go to areas within the electorate that would serve similar purposes to things that they had stood for, and they made a significant contribution to the development of this skills centre. Indeed, there are pieces of equipment in it that have little labels on them to indicate that they were donated by the CWA.

One of the other things that does not seem to be covered by this budget, though, is the issue of providing school buses and, indeed, appropriate public transport both for school students and others throughout my electorate. Up where I live there is a very good bus service, and it comes out of the Aldgate depot. Hills Transit now extends through to Mount Barker and Hahndorf, and so on, and I know that they do everything they can to provide the best service they can. However, when I attended a public meeting regarding the provision of public transport to areas like Summertown, Uraidla and Greenhill it was made clear by the representatives there that they would like to extend the services to Greenhill and up into the Hills, along that route, after dark, and they would like to be able to provide weekend services—even if it were just by way of feeder services to the main hubs of Crafrers and Stirling.

Basically, the difficulty is that the Department of Transport has not had any real increase in its funding for some years and, as they pointed out, the effect of no real increase in funding is inevitably that if you are going to put a new service into one area it means you have to take something out of another area to fund that. Therefore, they had something of a dilemma: how they could close another service that is already operating and in use in order to provide a service to the Hills—even if it is clearly established that people do want it and will use it. That is a real failing and it is something that the government does need to look at. They have failed to do so in this budget—but hopefully this will be their last budget and we will be back in government at the next election and will be able to do something about it.

Lastly, I want to touch on the fact that this government is neglecting the maintenance of roads and the appropriate dealing with roads. The RAA has come out quite clearly to say, 'We have done what we can in terms of driver behaviour, and we have done what we can in terms of the design of cars: we now need to work on the roads, their design, maintenance and upkeep.' We need to do that. We have a significant road network through the Hills and there are a lot of accidents in the Hills. We need to address that issue.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I would like to touch on a few points raised by the member for Enfield. I

always look forward to his contributions because he brings to the house nearly three years of experience only from the back bench of government. It is interesting to listen to contributions based on that experience, because my experience is somewhat different in relation to the value of estimates committees. I have had the experience of being a backbencher within government, a parliamentary secretary, a minister within government for three or four different portfolios, and then handling a number of different portfolios in opposition, and I think the estimates committees are a very good process for a number of reasons.

First, in essence, the departments actually have to do an annual audit on where they are up to with all their programs and what they are really doing with their budget. It is a good discipline, particularly for the CEOs, to get their management teams together and work out what the department is really doing. It is good for ministers and the ministers' staff to sit down with the department and quiz them on what they are doing with last year's allocation and what they intend to do with next year's allocation. I am sure there are ministers around who are quite surprised about what the department thinks it is going to do with the allocation, because it is not exactly the same as the minister understood they might be doing with that allocation. So, from a government viewpoint I think it is a worthy exercise, because it brings discipline to the process.

I appreciate that the member for Enfield is in an awkward spot, because the government tends to say: sit there all day and ask no questions; because you are on the government side of estimates committees, therefore, it is a long and tedious day for members of the government backbench. That is a matter for the government, not a matter for the process. The government could involve its members a lot more in the estimates process if it wished, but that is a matter between the member for Enfield and his government.

Estimates committees are a valuable tool for the opposition because they discipline shadow ministers and their staff to go through the budget line by line and get a better understanding of the processes and programs of government. Of course, on the actual day of the estimates committees, it also provides an excellent opportunity for shadow ministers to question the government on all sorts of matters that the government presents within its budget. So, I do not accept the argument that the estimates committee process is a waste of time. I think it is all about how you use it. I find it a very worthwhile process and I would not like to see any time lost by reducing the amount of time available to the estimates committees. I am attracted to the view of the Hon. Rob Lucas in another place that the parliament should be moving to more of a standing estimates committee or a rolling estimates committee (like they do in the federal parliament), which would provide more opportunity for people such as the member for Enfield and the shadow ministers to quiz the government on a more regular basis. I think that would be a good thing.

It always amazes me why government members such as the member for Enfield ask what the opposition is going to do with regard to taxation, expenditure and programs. It may come as some surprise to the member for Enfield, but we are still actually nine months out from the election. We do not need to lay down all the details of our programs yet, or any details of expenditure or revenue, because the experience in other states is that, if you go out too early, the Labor Party will simply say, 'That's not a bad idea,' and they will steal

the policy—and it's all over red rover. So, we will no doubt release our policies in due course.

The Hon. J.D. Hill: No doubt.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Minister for Environment and Conservation ridicules me for using the words 'no doubt'. The last opposition failed to produce a transport policy before the election. Hopefully, the government will come to the table this time with a transport policy. It will be somewhat innovative of the government to have a transport policy. This government is on record as having more transport ministers and transport policies and releasing more planning strategies so, hopefully, the government can pick up its game between now and the next election.

The member for Enfield has a problem, because on the day after the budget his Treasurer was out there saying, 'We are going to have to deal with payroll tax as the revenue allows.' Even though there was no reduction in payroll tax in the budget papers, the Treasurer was being badgered by the business community about not reducing payroll tax or not lifting the tax-free threshold on payroll tax, so he was automatically on the back foot saying, 'We will deal with payroll tax as the revenue allows.' The member for Enfield has the same problem. Can he tell us today what the government is going to do with payroll tax between now and post the election? The answer is that the member for Enfield and the government do not have a clue, because the Treasury himself is trying to work through that issue in relation to payroll tax.

They are no doubt doing the same with land tax because, despite the public announcement about land tax, the reality is that this government intends to collect more land tax through the budget than it did last year. So, they have made an announcement about the land tax reduction, and they intend to collect more. This government will have to work through the land tax issue. No-one in the government can suggest to us what they will do in respect of that issue.

I wish to touch a little bit on the lack of expenditure in the seat of Davenport. We could do a bit of a chart for the seat of Davenport, because I think my electorate may actually be a key contributor to other seats as a result of this government's actions. We went to the 2002 election promising a CFS station at Eden Hills, which is about three-quarters of a million dollars; we had a \$1.8 million project at the Coromandel Primary School, of which the state government was contributing \$600 000; we had a redevelopment at the Old Belair Road-James Road intersection, which was about \$900 000, part of the \$1.8 million package; and the Blythwood roundabout upgrade, north of Blythwood Road (the Adelaide side of Blythwood Road), was part of that budget. What did we get? The government cut \$900 000 out of the James Road-Old Belair Road intersection, and now we have a mess on our hands, with another 600 homes going into Blackwood Park. There will be 5 000 more traffic movements hitting the Blackwood roundabout as a result of the Blackwood Park development, and the first thing the government did was to cut \$900 000 out of an upgrade of the Old Belair Road-James Road intersection.

We then go to the Coromandel Primary School, where this government's first action was to cut \$600 000 out of the Coromandel Primary School. The government's next action, Mr Speaker, as you would be aware, was to cut \$750 000 out of the Eden Hills Primary School. And, here we are, the last budget before the election, and what does Davenport get in the budget? It gets \$100 000 for Bellevue Heights Primary

School. So, we lose \$750 000 for the Eden Hills CFS station; we lose \$900 000 for the Old Belair Road-James Road intersection upgrade; we lose \$600 000 out of the Coromandel Valley Primary School; and Bellevue Heights Primary School—and good on them—has won \$100 000 in this budget. That is it.

The electors of Eden Hills (the Attorney-General talks about the government's good box at Eden Hills), Hawthorndene and other areas that look at supporting a Labor government should look at this budget to see what this government has done and has not done to the Mitcham Hills. What the government has not done is resourced it or put money into projects. I congratulate Bellevue Heights Primary School for its \$100 000 towards the start-up of what will be an \$800 000 project. I have worked with them on it, and good on them for getting it. However, it is disappointing that this government has taken so much money out of the Mitcham Hills and placed it in other areas. As members opposite know, those projects are badly needed.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): It is with great pleasure that I rise tonight in this grievance debate. There are a number of things I wish to canvas in the 10 minutes I have available to me. However, I will start by responding to some of the things the member for Enfield has said. He talked about payroll tax and land tax, and he wanted to know what the opposition was going to do, what our policy would be and what we would do if we were in government. I advise the member for Enfield that the opposition is still trying to find out what programs were cut by the Labor Party in the first 12 months after it came to power.

Members would remember when we said, 'How are you paying for this?', and the government said, 'We are re-ordering priorities.' The government earmarked \$970 million, which it went out and spent. We ask the questions in the house and in the other place. We put the questions on the *Notice Paper*, and they have never been answered. The government has already done it, and it will not answer the questions. Yet, the government has the temerity to say, 'What would the opposition do? How is the opposition going to justify its announcements when it comes to the next election campaign?' When the government comes clean with the people of South Australia, this parliament and the opposition, we will be in a position to tell the government what our policy will be and exactly where the dollars will come from.

I tell members one thing: when we are in government, we will be reordering some priorities. We will be rolling over the hollow logs. The Treasurer has a fantastic record. He has now brought down four budgets, but the first three budgets he missed the red by an average of \$600 million per year. So, I do not think we have to worry too much about where the money is coming from, because we know where the money is coming from. This budget, like the last two, is full of hollow logs. It is still awash with cash, and we know where the money is coming from. We will be reordering some priorities. Do not worry about that, member for Enfield.

I want to talk about a number of other things, and it would be remiss of me not to talk about the air warfare destroyer contract which was awarded to South Australia today. It was great news for South Australia. This will go towards underpinning the economy where the government, over the last three years, has failed. To some extent, this will make up for the failures of the current government over the next period in South Australia, and that is great news for South Australia.

Thank goodness the federal government was able to look at South Australia and say that, notwithstanding the Labor government and the message it is creating, South Australia can still put up a good bid. Why is that? That is because, in the eight years we were in government, we ensured that we were positioning ourselves to win this sort of contract. We were ensuring that the sort of businesses that were operating in South Australia would put us in a very good position, and we built the defence industry sector. We established the cluster around which these defence players were able to come to South Australia or, if they were already here, make a commitment to stay here.

I want to name a few of these companies: BAE Systems—which was in two minds whether to stay in South Australia—Tenix, SAAB Industries, Raytheon, GM Defence and General Dynamics Land Systems. These are the sorts of companies that, in government, the Liberal Party ensured—and we make no apology that we used taxpayers dollars—stayed in South Australia or came to South Australia and built themselves into a viable industry here. Today, we reaped the benefits. Were it not for the Liberal government during the 1990s, building that defence industry sector, we would not have won that contract today. It is high time that the Premier acknowledged that.

I want to move on to another issue that is a hot topic around the state at the moment. I want to talk about the Deputy Premier's wont to go out and abuse and bully people. As we sat here yesterday aghast at his ministerial statement, the Deputy Premier talked about the Director of Public Prosecutions. It was a five-page tirade of abuse and invective against the Director of Public Prosecutions. No wonder the Director of Public Prosecutions was forced to issue a press release today. Let me just revisit some of the things that the Deputy Premier said. Amongst other things, he said—and he was talking about Mr Pallaras coming out and making a statement—that less than 24 hours before the budget was released Mr Pallaras made a public statement.

The Deputy Premier did not announce to the house in his tirade yesterday that the Director of Public Prosecutions, in the statement he made 24 hours before the budget was released, was answering media inquiries. Why were there media inquiries? Because the government started leaking. What did they expect? The government was out there leaking. Everybody in South Australia knew what the DPP's budget was going to be. He had already raised this as an issue. Everybody in South Australia knew what his budget was going to be, except for the DPP. He did not know. The media started ringing up. They were knocking on his door and saying, 'What is your response to this?' He gave his response and the Deputy Premier did not like it. He would have us believe—and this is what he wanted the house to believe when he made his ministerial statement yesterday—that Mr Pallaras went out in a proactive way. That is nonsense, and the Deputy Premier knew it. They knew it.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: He is a very proactive DPP. He is a very good DPP.

Mr WILLIAMS: The Attorney-General says that he is a very good DPP, and he is. They do not have to convince me. They need to convince their Premier and Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier came in here and made his ministerial statement because he knew that he had overstepped the mark. He knew he had overstepped the mark in his telephone conversation—because we know that the Deputy Premier is a bullyboy. We know what he is like. He got on the phone to Mr Pallaras and abused him and threatened him with all the

invective in the world. We know what he did. We know what he is like. Mr Pallaras complained to the Attorney-General, and the Deputy Premier thought to himself, 'What will happen when this gets out in the public arena? I will look like a bit of a goose.' It is time that the Deputy Premier realised that he is a bit of a goose. He thought, 'I had better get out there first.' That is what he did. He came in here and made his ministerial statement, because he wanted to cut off Mr Pallaras at the pass and make sure he was out there before him. Sir, I seek leave to continue my remarks later.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

PHYSIOTHERAPY PRACTICE BILL

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

- No. 1—Clause 6, page 8, line 22—
Clause 6(1)—delete '8' and substitute:
9
- No. 2—Clause 6, page 8, line 23—
Clause 6(1)(a)—delete '4' and substitute:
5
- No. 3—Clause 6, page 8, lines 24 and 25—
Clause 6(1)(a)(i)—delete subparagraph (i) and substitute:
(i) 4 are to be chosen at an election (see section 6A); and
- No. 4—Clause 6, page 8, lines 32 to 35—
Clause 6(2) and (3)—delete subclauses (2) and (3)
- No. 5—Clause 6, page 9, line 3—
Clause 6(6)—after 'nomination' insert:
(if applicable)
- No. 6—New clause—
After clause 6 insert:
6A—Elections and casual vacancies
(1) An election conducted to choose physiotherapists for appointment to the Board must be conducted under the regulations in accordance with principles of proportional representation.
(2) A person who is a physiotherapist at the time the voters roll is prepared for an election in accordance with the regulations is entitled to vote at the election.
(3) If an election of a member fails for any reason, the Governor may appoint a physiotherapist and the person so appointed will be taken to have been appointed after due election under this section.

(4) If a casual vacancy occurs in the office of a member chosen at an election, the following rules govern the appointment of a person to fill the vacancy:

- (a) if the vacancy occurs within 12 months after the member's election and at that election a candidate or candidates were excluded, the Governor must appoint the person who was the last excluded candidate at that election;
- (b) if that person is no longer qualified for appointment or is unavailable or unwilling to be appointed or if the vacancy occurs later than 12 months after the member's election, the Governor may appoint a physiotherapist nominated by the Minister;
- (c) before nominating a physiotherapist for appointment the Minister must consult the representative bodies;
- (d) the person appointed holds office for the balance of the term of that person's predecessor.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Today during question time the Leader of the Opposition asked me to table minutes between the Treasurer and me, and between the Director of Public Prosecutions and me, about the Treasurer's telephone conversation with the DPP. I promised to do so. I table my minutes to the Treasurer and the DPP (including attachments), the Treasurer's reply to me and meeting notes of 26 May relevant to the conversation.

On another matter, I understand that the DPP today issued a press release in which he incorrectly claims to have reported his conversation with the Deputy Premier to me 'on the evening of 25 May'. As I have stated on the record, the first time the DPP raised this matter with me was at our regular meeting on the morning of Thursday 26 May. I have raised this error with the DPP and he accepts that the first time he raised the matter was 26 May.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the house adjourned until Wednesday 1 June at 2 p.m.