

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 26 September 2006

The **SPEAKER (Hon. J.J. Snelling)** took the chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

GAWLER RIVER

A petition signed by 796 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to clear the Gawler River bed of debris consisting of trees and rubbish, accumulated over many years, as part of the Gawler River Flood Mitigation Scheme before consideration is given to the construction of additional channels and slipways, was presented by the Hon. P.L. White.

Petition received.

TRANSPORT, SOUTHERN SUBURBS

A petition signed by 47 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to take action to ensure that transport services to residents of the southern suburbs are of the same standard provided to residents of the northern suburbs and recognise the need to provide a light rail or bus/mono rail system as far as Aldinga, was presented by Mr Hamilton-Smith.

Petition received.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The **SPEAKER**: I lay on the table the Register of Members' Interests, Registrar's Statement, June 2006.

Ordered to be published.

MEMBERS' TRAVEL REPORT

The **SPEAKER**: I lay on the table the House of Assembly Members' Annual Travel Report 2005-06.

URANIUM EXPORTS

The **Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier)**: I seek leave to make a statement about uranium sales to India.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: BHP Billiton has just announced that the ore body at Olympic Dam has 188 000 tonnes more uranium than was previously known. This latest announcement takes the known uranium ore body at Roxby from 1.5 million tonnes to almost 1.7 million tonnes and adds \$30 billion in current prices to the value of the mine. This revaluation announced today adds an extra \$30 billion to the value of the Roxby Downs mine. This is great news.

Members interjecting:

The **SPEAKER**: Order!

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: This is great news and we await the company's decision on a massive expansion, which the company says would create an extra 23 000 jobs. We continue to work closely with BHP Billiton, including about the potential for the biggest desalination plant in the southern hemisphere to be located in the Upper Spencer Gulf, which would provide high quality water that would sustain an expanded Olympic Dam mine, as well as providing water for the Spencer Gulf cities and the Eyre Peninsula, thereby

relieving pressure on both the Great Artesian Basin and on the River Murray.

But today's announcement highlights the need for a responsible federal position on where that uranium is sold. For that reason I was deeply concerned to read reports in recent days that the Howard government is considering dumping its restrictions on the export of uranium to India, despite New Delhi's refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Labor welcomes India's recent commitment to meeting international nuclear safeguards and the fact that India insists that it is not a proliferating country, despite its strategic nuclear weapons program. But the fact remains that India is not a signatory to the non-proliferation treaty. Currently, the commonwealth government prohibits the sale of uranium to countries that have not signed that treaty—and rightly so.

This is a responsible position of leadership and recognises that Australia, and particularly South Australia, has the world's greatest known uranium resource; therefore, we should use our position of power to put pressure on countries to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. If these reports are correct that there is going to be a change in federal policy, presumably the new arrangements would mean that India would be exempt from this policy or, worse still, even consider a further relaxation to include other non-signatory countries.

If the Howard government abandons its restrictions on the export of uranium to India, this will be in direct conflict with previous statements the Prime Minister has made. Listen to this—

Members interjecting:

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: Apparently, members opposite support selling uranium to countries that will not sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Mr Koutsantonis: Would you sell it to Iran?

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: Yes; would you sell it to Iran?

Mr Williams interjecting:

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: They won't even say no to Iran!

The **SPEAKER**: Order!

The **Hon. M.D. RANN**: Let's remind the Prime Minister what he said about India's lack of responsibility. In May 1998, India detonated five nuclear bombs underground, sparking similar tests by its neighbour Pakistan. At the time, the Prime Minister, John Howard, rightly denounced both India and, later, Pakistan's actions. *The Australian* of 13 May 1998 (just after the test) quotes the Prime Minister, John Howard, as saying that India's actions were:

... an ill-judged step which could have most damaging consequences for security in South Asia and globally.

Two days later, Mr Howard was again quoted in *The Australian*, stating:

What the Indian government has done is to play fast and loose with international safety and security.

That is what the Prime Minister, John Howard, said. Now he is talking about selling them uranium. The Prime Minister continued to 'deplore and condemn absolutely' (and those were his words) what India had done. The Prime Minister said that it was:

... an irresponsible genuflection to transient domestic political popularity. . . It is the most deeply disturbing development in every sense of those words.

After similar nuclear tests by the Pakistan government in late May the same year, the Prime Minister was again quoted in *The Australian* on 30 May as saying:

Once you have nuclear weapons in the hands of two countries next door to each other who have... fought conventional wars with each other within the last 50 years, once those two countries have nuclear weapons the danger of something happening is much, much greater

The Defence Force chief at the time (John Baker) further articulated the threat, indicating that Australia's own security interests could be threatened if India were able to develop more nuclear weapons. He was quoted as saying—and this is the head of the Australian Defence Force:

We take a very solid stance on proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, simply because their introduction into our region and they put us within range—fundamentally changes our security in ways that are not in our interests.

So, the Australian government, led by John Howard, was so concerned by India's actions back in 1998 that it:

- temporarily suspended ministerial and official visits to India;
- suspended defence cooperation;
- suspended all non-humanitarian aid; and
- recalled its defence adviser.

I am aware that there has been a change of government in India to the Congress, or the Labor Party, since that time, but the new government there of Mr Singh still refuses to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. So, what has changed? My challenge to the Prime Minister today is to clarify Australia's position so that we can again be a leader in fighting the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

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

Evidence Act 1929—Suppression Orders—Pursuant to Section 71—Report 2005-06

Legal Services Commission of South Australia—Report 2004-05

Regulations under the following Act—
Professional Standards Act 2004

By the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education (Hon. P. Caica)—

Social Development Committee Report on the Impact of International Education Activities in SA September 2006—Government Response.

VISITORS TO PARLIAMENT

The SPEAKER: I draw to members' attention the presence in the chamber today of students from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, who are guests of the member for Enfield.

QUESTION TIME

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): In light of the Premier's ministerial statement on India and uranium mining, will he now stop all ministerial visits to India until India does sign a nuclear non-proliferation treaty?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): What an incredibly inane question. What we are saying is that we should not sell uranium to India while it refuses to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Is this supposed to be an alternative premier. Is that the kind of calibre of the lead question in question time, straight after a budget?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Vickie, you are looking better by the moment; you are looking better day by day.

INJURED WORKERS

Mrs GERAGHTY (Torrens): My question is to the Minister for Industrial Relations. What steps will the government take to further assist injured workers who are nearing retirement age?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Industrial Relations): I thank the member for Torrens. I know she has a strong commitment to injured workers. I am pleased to be able to inform the house that today the government will release a draft bill to extend entitlements for injured workers. Currently, with respect to income maintenance, if a worker is injured near or over 65 years of age, provided they are below 70 years of age, they receive up to six months income maintenance. Our bill essentially means that anyone injured within two years of turning 65 (or above that age) can receive weekly payments of compensation for up to two years until they turn 70. All other entitlements—medical, hospital, travel, rehabilitation costs and any entitlement to a lump sum payment for non-economic loss—will continue regardless of the worker's age.

WorkCover advises me that the cost impact of the proposal is considered to be between \$500 000 and \$1 million per annum. Adopting the proposed amendments will create a more equitable compensation scheme in which people who choose to remain in the work force for longer will have access to longer periods of weekly payments in the event that they are injured at work. This proposal will have a positive community impact, particularly for older South Australians, and will go a long way towards offering those who work beyond 65 some surety. Once stakeholders have provided us with their feedback, I look forward to introducing the bill into the house.

SCHOOLS, BANK ACCOUNTS

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Why is the government proposing to take back \$6 million a year in interest out of school bank accounts? In a press release last week, the government announced:

Schools will no longer retain interest on money stored in school bank accounts. This will take nearly \$18 million over three years from schools.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer has the call.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): If I am not mistaken, that was a budget question and, surprise, surprise, the Treasurer wants to answer it. I am glad that the most important question the Leader of the Opposition asked today, his first question after the budget, was whether or not there would be overseas trips to India. Fair dinkum! That is the calibre of a would-be premier of this state.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The Treasurer, improperly, has reflected upon

the leader. It has nothing to do with answering the question. I ask you to rule him out of order.

The SPEAKER: I do not think the Treasurer is making any personal reflections. In any case, I am sure if the Leader of the Opposition takes offence he is more than capable of speaking for himself. The Treasurer has the call, but I ask him to get on with his answer.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. I simply observed that I thought that a question about overseas travel to India would not have been the highest priority of the Leader of the Opposition today. We delivered our budget on Thursday: we are proud of it, and we stand by it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I don't think they like the public response to our budget. They have had four lazy months as an opposition, hoping that they would have an opportunity to attack the government, and what has happened is they are lazy—

Mrs REDMOND: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. My point is relevance, sir.

The Hon. K. Foley: Yes, you're irrelevant. That's correct.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer is now debating.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Sir, I take a further point of order. Members on the other side should stop interjecting for a moment. If they want us to follow standing orders, perhaps they should do so themselves.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer has the call.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. The decision on the interest amount earned on school bank accounts is a simple one: it relates to money provided in annual grants by the government, not to money raised by the school. One of the realities of local school management, which devolved initially under the former government and is maintained under this government, is that school bank accounts have increased significantly. According to our estimate—and on the latest advice, from memory—the figure is somewhere in the order of \$190 million. I am happy to get that amount substantiated, but about \$190 million (or, I think, \$193 million) of money which the state government has provided to our schools is currently sitting in school bank accounts.

Mr Hanna: It's matched up to liabilities, isn't it?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No, it's not matched with liabilities.

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Sir, I am happy to give the house an answer, but I do not see much point in trying to compete with members opposite. If they would like an answer, I am more than happy to stand here and provide it. This \$193 million of school money is a very large amount of money in which we want to see some movement. We want to see money that is provided to our schools being spent on our kids today. We are saying that the money on deposit (it is deposited with SAFA, the South Australian Financing Authority, and it earns interest) should be spent on today's children. So, we are not allowing school councils to keep the interest earned on that money. We want to see that money churned and spent. We will need to put in place some mechanisms to ensure that this cash balance held in our schools is actually spent and not maintained at a very high level.

FRINGE FESTIVAL

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): My question is to the Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts. What sponsorship support has the Fringe received for the 2007 festival?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts): I thank the member for Norwood for her interest in this issue. During the last state election, the government decided to build on its decision to stage an annual WOMAdelaide festival and make the Fringe an annual event from 2007. This decision will not only help attract new audiences to the Fringe but also it will give more opportunities to South Australian artists to showcase their work. I am pleased to say that preparations for the 2007 Fringe are on track. I am informed that the response from artists has been fantastic, and the 2007 festival should have a really great breadth of performance.

Today I can announce that BankSA has got behind the move to an annual event. The company has committed to being the principal partner for each Fringe event through to and including 2010. It has now increased its total sponsorship of the Fringe to \$1.6 million over that period of time, and that increase of \$200 000 follows the announcement of an annual Fringe. I want to commend BankSA and, indeed, all the sponsors of arts companies in South Australia. It is very difficult for arts companies to get sponsorship. We do very much appreciate those organisations and businesses that get behind our arts companies in South Australia.

In addition, BankSA will continue to invest in initiatives to increase participation in the Fringe and support emerging artists. The success of the BankSA and Adelaide Fringe partnership was recently recognised with an Australia Business Arts Foundation Partnering Award. These partners are now finalists in the national awards to be announced on 26 October. I congratulate the Fringe and BankSA on that partnership, and I hope they do extremely well at the national awards because, indeed, they have set a very high benchmark for other businesses in South Australia.

SCHOOLS, BANK ACCOUNTS

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. How does the government expect school communities to cover the loss of \$6 million per year in interest, and is it through more volunteer fundraising? School council members have contacted the opposition concerned that they will be expected to do more fundraising to cover the \$6 million a year loss.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): Can I just say, particularly for the benefit of the media—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: This particular matter was announced in a press release, I understand, on the day of the budget, and here we are on the Tuesday after the budget with this shock revelation. The media was in receipt of this information via press releases, I understand, on Thursday. So, we have been up-front about these measures, and we were up-front on Thursday. Here we have, some four or five days later, a lazy opposition—

Mr WILLIAMS: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for MacKillop has a point of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: It is question time and, specifically, the question was: how will school communities find the extra \$6 million the Treasurer is ripping off them? We do not want an explanation as to how and when the media release went out.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer does need to answer the substance of the question.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: This story is old. We were up-front; we released all this information on Thursday.

Ms Chapman: You tried to bury it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We put it in a press release. The media had it for hours during the lock-up and have had it ever since, and members opposite bring it out as a new story today. Hello!

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Hello!

Members interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Hello—very slow on the uptake! This opposition took four days off after the budget. We did not see them Friday, we did not see them Saturday, we did not see them Sunday—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer is now debating.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. They are lucky: they got a long weekend last weekend and they get a long weekend next weekend. Oh, the lot of a lazy opposition! As I said, the Leader of the Opposition's press release is quite misleading when it says that this is interest earned on fundraising from the schools. It is about the annual government grant component of that money. As I said—

Ms Chapman: You are taking it away.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Well, they are not spending it. That is the whole point of the exercise: the schools are not spending it. I am advised that we have \$193 million (or thereabouts) in cash balances in our schools. That is one of the realities—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Clearly, I do not need to answer the question. We have put out a press release and the member for MacKillop seems to know all the answers. Unless I can add anything to what the genius from Millicent can say, I am not sure what more I can do.

MATURE AGED UNEMPLOYMENT

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What is the government doing to assist unemployed mature-aged South Australians to re-enter the work force?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I thank the member for Florey for the question and her commitment to all aspects of work force development. With the booming South Australian economy and the rapid changes in technology, it is imperative that we provide every opportunity for unemployed mature-aged people to prepare themselves to re-enter the work force. Mature-aged workers account for approximately 25 per cent of the state's population. Over the next decade, there will be an increased proportion of people nearing the traditional retirement age, and this is likely to have a wide range of

economic and social impacts, particularly regarding the composition of our state's labour force.

This means that there is an increasing number of mature-aged people in our work force who have the potential to make a strong and continuing economic and social contribution that should be valued by all South Australians. The Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, through its South Australia Works program, has assisted over 5 000 mature-aged participants in a range of specific programs. In 2005-06, some 1 087 mature-aged workers gained employment directly as a result of these programs, with many others indirectly assisted in preparation for achievement of employment outcomes.

One program which has been particularly successful is DFEEST's Employment 40-plus program. This program acknowledges and promotes the recognition of older workers' experience, as well as providing opportunities for mature-aged job seekers to become familiar with the changing labour market. The program currently consists of a series of forums and workshops, each running over three days. During 2005-06, a total of 11 forums were held in metropolitan and regional South Australia, assisting in excess of 300 people over the age of 40. The next Employment 40-plus forum will be held at the Education Development Centre, Hindmarsh on Friday 29 September. I urge business, industry and the community in general to recognise the important role mature-aged workers play and their potential to make a significant contribution to our state's future prosperity.

SCHOOLS, BANK ACCOUNTS

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): My question again is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Given the Treasurer's previous answer, how will those schools that had planned to spend the interest money on projects such as facilities now replace the lost money?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): The school is provided with a grant allocated money to spend on projects. The interest is not additional money. It is not as if they are provided with—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It is a windfall gain to school councils that we want spent on the children of today: it is a simple exercise. I was accused of burying this issue. I have just read the press release. It was hardly buried. There are a series of dot points on page 2 of a press release dated Thursday 21 September. The very first item says that savings will include \$17.9 million over three years. Schools will no longer retain the benefits of interest on money stored in school bank accounts, so today's education funding is spent on today's children. The press release is dated Thursday 21 September. It has taken them four days to come up with some sort of shock horror story—hardly, it is in the press release. You cannot be more up-front than that, Mr Speaker. You are a lazy opposition.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer is now debating. I presume that was the point of order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

THEATRE DEVELOPMENT

Ms SIMMONS (Morialta): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier advise the house about the government's new strategies for promoting theatre development throughout South Australia?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): This is breaking news. I want to thank the member for her question. South Australia has two exceptional major theatre companies, Windmill Performing Arts and the State Theatre Company, which each and every year showcase world class productions for South Australian audiences, and from time to time interstate and even overseas audiences. Recently, Windmill Performing Arts—and I want to pay a tribute to Diana Laidlaw. She was the force behind Windmill and she is on the board of Windmill. Windmill has completed a very successful tour of *Twinkle twinkle little fish* to Japan, and presented *Two weeks with the Queen* at the Parramatta Riverside Theatre in Sydney. They were absolutely terrific, I am told. I did not see them, but I am told by the minister responsible that they are just terrific.

There is strong and growing demand for Windmill's productions, both interstate and overseas. The State Theatre Company production of *The Goat* was presented earlier this year in Sydney. The State Theatre has also received critical acclaim and a national Helpmann Award as well as an inaugural South Australian Ruby Award for its world premiere adaptation of South Australian writer Peter Goldsworthy's novel *Honk if you are Jesus*. The company's 2006 production of Samuel Beckett's masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* was also both a critical and box office success. These companies feature the best of South Australia's actors and actresses as well as our theatre directors and playwrights. There is a need, however, to further strengthen theatre production in South Australia to broaden and improve the opportunities for the development of our actors and actresses, directors and playwrights.

It is at the second tier and project based levels that emerging actors, playwrights, directors and designers get the opportunity to gain the experience to strengthen their craft. Companies such as Brink Productions, Vitalstatix and the Patch Theatre Company are outstanding examples of South Australian second tier theatre companies that are developing exciting new works for presentation interstate and overseas, as well as within South Australia. To enable opportunities for smaller, project based theatre companies to progress to the next stage of development the government is embarking on a two-pronged approach—the Theatre Development Strategy and Regional Theatre Initiative.

The Theatre Development Strategy will select a small number of project based theatre companies or groups of independent artists to benefit from a targeted, three-year program of support and development. Expressions of interest and proposals will be invited from South Australian based groups and artists who have received project assistance from Arts SA and/or the Australia Council over the past three years. For example, companies such as Paralello, Bakehouse and Holden Street Theatres will be eligible to apply. The strategy will provide two to three short-listed companies or groups of artists with a funding package of \$70 000 to \$100 000 per annum for performance activity with associated strategic planning, program development, management and marketing. They will be encouraged to find the most suitable management and governance models, develop relationships with funding agencies and sponsors, for instance, the

Australia Council and through AbaF, and explore partnership and presentation opportunities with festivals, with venues, existing companies and independent producers.

The companies will also be provided with ongoing guidance and support by Arts SA and key established theatre companies and mentors. It is envisaged that, at the end of the three years, the companies will be in the position to apply for ongoing funding, both from Arts SA and the Australia Council, or to generate alternative income sources. The strategy has been designed to identify our emerging theatre companies and to nurture their development and growth. It aims to improve opportunities for the smaller project based companies to develop their long-term planning, to develop programs, to improve their marketing skills, to create career pathways for artists and, in turn, improve audience numbers. The Organisations Assessment Panel has unanimously endorsed the strategy and has commended the government for its visionary new approach.

Consistent with the arts industry's preference for peer-based assessment and decision making, a peer panel of theatre practitioners will recommend which companies or groups will be supported through the Theatre Development Strategy. To ensure the development of our regional theatre, Arts SA has also been working with Country Arts SA and the Theatre Board to develop a Regional Theatre Initiative, and I note it will be of interest to all members here representing country South Australia or the regions. It is envisaged that this initiative will involve the development and presentation of theatre projects in different regions across the state. There will be development opportunities for South Australian artists and the potential for the work to tour throughout South Australia and nationally.

In 2007 it is proposed that a creative producer based at Country Arts SA will work in two regional communities: the Upper Spencer Gulf and the South-East. This will coincide with the implementation of the Regional Centre for Culture program in Port Augusta and will also give the communities of the South-East opportunities to continue to access theatre projects and activity previously delivered by Mainstreet Theatre. The strategy is about the dawn of a new era for the theatre industry in South Australia. It shows the commitment of this government to the development of theatre in South Australia, and peer assessment is obviously critically important. I know that companies support peer assessment, that is, decisions based on committees of their peers rather than I or the Minister for Health inflicting our taste on the public of South Australia. We know that people would not criticise peer assessment committees when they support projects, just as they wouldn't criticise them when they don't.

SCHOOLS, FUNDING

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): Does the Treasurer recognise that interest earned by schools on money may not cover the increasing costs occurring between when the money is received and when it is spent on the project? If so, how does the minister expect schools to cover the loss of interest?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): We don't accept the Leader of the Opposition's hypothesis there.

TOURISM

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson): My question is for the Minister for Tourism. What is the government doing to promote nature-based tourism experiences in our state?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): I thank the honourable member for his question. I know he has a keen interest in tourism around the state and particularly understands the economic benefit of ecotourism and cultural tourism events. It is true to say that over half of international visitors to South Australia enjoy some form of outdoor experience, perhaps bushwalking, swimming with cuttlefish, visiting Bairds Bay to swim with dolphins or diving in the Piccaninny Ponds. These sorts of opportunities are world-class experiences both for international and domestic tourists.

We know that people coming to South Australia for these experiences are keen to experience first-hand an authentic and genuine glimpse of nature, the environment, often with an element of sport, albeit only occasionally extreme sport as well. The Tourism Commission has looked at this as a niche market and, in partnership with the Department of Environment and Heritage, has developed a responsible nature-based tourism strategy to implement between 2004 and 2009. This is important because we know that some of our most attractive and saleable destinations are also fragile environments and vulnerable to overuse. This strategy provides a vision for our state to be an innovative leader in sustainable tourism whilst maintaining, protecting and enriching these environmental nature experiences.

South Australia, of course, has a variety of extraordinary activities to enjoy. You can go caving in our only world heritage-listed site in Naracoorte in the world heritage-listed caves; you can swim with sea lions or dolphins at Bairds Bay; you can enjoy diving with the giant cuttlefish during their breeding season in Whyalla in July; and you can enjoy a camel trek along the Oodnadatta Track. South Australia's range of extraordinary natural experiences means that we could market each of these in niches not just to Australia but to the world.

In terms of this marketing it has been important to support destination development, product development and packaging of these and we have done it in a way to market it through nature experience guides. We have produced a range of these brochures, which include: cruising on the river; four-wheel drive experiences; wildlife experiences—up close and personal; walking experiences through over 300 national parks; and fossils, geology and cave experiences, which include not just Naracoorte but also encompass the Flinders Chase reserve, the Ediacaran collection in the Far North and Burra, where there are mega fauna and diprotodon bones. We also market floral experiences, fishing experiences, genuine eco-tourism, amazing diving experiences and cycling. Increasingly, tourists come with their own bicycles, as well as enjoying other cycle events like the Tour Down Under and other races. They also bring their own bicycles and participate.

We have grouped together cruising the coast, being part of a conservation activity, looking at the stars, bird watching, adventure experiences, indigenous experiences and nature experiences. These packages of 16 brochures will market to the world but are also available online through southaustralia.com. Those connections have gone live today and I am very pleased that this program, which has meant an investment of \$45 000, has been packaged with other government departments and industry to market some of the

best of our natural experiences. I commend these packages to members, would welcome giving some to some of the electorate offices and suggest that you might take a break over the long weekend and get back to nature.

SCHOOLS, FUNDING

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): I am going to Rawnsley Park on the weekend to the new eco-villas there. My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Has the government done any assessment of the impact on schools when they lose \$6 million in interest out of school bank accounts? The Treasurer a few minutes ago acknowledged that schools previously benefited from the interest received on school accounts.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank the member for Morphett for his question. He would have heard, had he listened, that the Treasurer said that almost \$200 million is in school bank accounts. That money has been provided this year, last year and the year before to pay for services to those years' children. Those moneys were not paid to invest in our grandchildren's services. They were given state funds to educate—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The house will come to order. The minister has the call.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH:—our children and we would like to see those moneys spent on today's children. Certainly there are moneys that were not provided by the government—we understand that. We are mindful of the chook raffles and the other sources of income, but the reality is—and the fact not made by members opposite—is that we are actually introducing this program in 2008. So, we have more than a year to help inform and educate school communities, because I am the first person to admit (and perhaps it is a good thing) that school communities are naturally conservative. School councils look after other people's money as I suspect they would choose to look after their own. They are naturally conservative.

Having said that, we need to teach communities how to spend the money for the good of today's children. We need to encourage them to invest in education because, after all, when we send over \$1 billion to our schools around the state, we are not giving money as an investment for children in 2035. We are putting money in school communities for today. The impact of not accruing extra interest on the millions and millions of dollars in bank accounts will be perhaps so that school communities might be encouraged to spend the money on today's children.

DISABILITY HOUSING

Ms FOX (Bright): My question is to the Minister for Housing. How is the state government increasing the supply of housing for people with a disability?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Housing): In addition to increasing our spending in the disability services area by something like 36 per cent since coming to government, we are also looking at innovative new ways of partnering with the non-government sector to increase the supply of housing. One of the organisations with whom we are forming a cooperative relationship is Bedford Industries. In February this year, the Premier and I were very pleased to announce the state government's involvement in the Bedford

Homes for 100 project. The sum of \$1.5 million of a \$5 million state government commitment comes from the Affordable Housing Innovations Fund and is directed at new and innovative housing ideas in partnership with Bedford Industries.

Of course, Bedford Industries is a well-loved and well-known institution in this state. It is one of the real success stories in disability services. We have the highest rate of people in South Australia who take up supported employment, and Bedford is part of that success story. I am pleased to inform the house today that a new working group has been set up between the government and Bedford. Mr Bill Cossey—who, as many will be aware, was a former public servant and is now President of IPAA (the professional association for public servants)—has agreed to be an independent chair of that group. He will guide the government and Bedford in achieving the outcome for this project.

One of the projects I want to draw to the attention of the house is a \$1 million joint initiative between the state government and Bedford for some units at Seacombe Gardens, which will provide more affordable, high-quality housing opportunities for people with a disability. These units have been specifically designed for Bedford clients in an area that is close to their place of employment and also to support services. This is a joint project with the Office for Community Housing and the Bedford Housing Cooperative. One three-bedroom and four two-bedroom units are being built by Normus Homes in Ramsay Avenue, Seacombe Gardens. Construction of the units has started, and we expect that they will be completed by the end of the year.

In conclusion, I congratulate Max Dyason, the Chief Executive Officer of Bedford, a real leader who is prepared to be innovative in partnership with the state government in order to achieve our joint objectives.

VISITORS TO PARLIAMENT

The SPEAKER: Before I call on the next question, I draw to honourable members' attention the presence in the chamber of year 3 students from Golden Grove Lutheran Primary School, who are guests of the member for Wright.

SCHOOLS, BANK ACCOUNTS

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): My question is again to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. If a school disagrees with or refuses to allow interest to be taken out of its account, is it the government's intention to take the money anyway?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): The money is on deposit with the South Australian Government Financing Authority. The government has made a policy decision, which was announced last Thursday. That is the budget.

HEALTH SA

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): My question is to the Minister for Health. Does one have to be a feminist to get employment in Health SA? At the end of last week, I was contacted by a person who referred me to an advertisement in *The Advertiser* of 16 September for a men's worker position with Central Northern Primary Health Care Services. I was asked: how do you explain that, to be a men's worker, you need to be a feminist, and how far is the South Australian government in the hands of the radical feminist mafia?

At first, I thought this was a joke. A staff member obtained the person specification, and I found that one of the requirements stated that staff are expected to have knowledge of and be committed to feminism. I will not read all the document, but that was one of the considerations, namely, that you must be committed to feminism. I ask the minister whether that is the policy of his department.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health): I thank the member for Fisher for this question. The document to which he refers is a template used in the Central Northern area. I do not know whether parliament needs to know the whole lot, but the person specification says that the area:

... strongly upholds the following principles, practices and values and expects staff to have knowledge of and be committed to:

- Social Justice
- Primary Health Care
- Feminism
- Reconciliation
- Gender Accountability
- Cultural Diversity
- Challenging Racism

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I question gender accountability. I gather that means that you are supposed to be aware of the needs of particular genders: what men's and women's health needs are. I think when this template was constructed, they were obviously trying to make sure that they employed people who were not racist or sexist and who had the right kind of attitudes and skills. However, I think most members would agree that they were perhaps a bit heavy-handed in the formulation of this document. I am pleased to say that this is an old document and has been replaced by a new document which does not use this formulation: it covers the attitudes and values that are required in a less politically correct way. I wonder whether 'mateship' and 'border control' have been included. If so, some of the people who object to this set of values might feel more comfortable.

This document, which I gather has been phased out for new jobs, unfortunately is still being used for existing jobs which are being rolled over, but I assume it will not be from now on. When I asked where this document came from, I was told that this template was adopted in 1998 when that well-known, sensitive, new-age guy and uberfeminist, Dean Craig Brown, was the responsible minister.

SCHOOLS, BANK ACCOUNTS

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. What consultation will the government undertake with schools about losing their \$6 million in interest from the school accounts? Last week, the minister told the house that they were a consulting government.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I am delighted by the question—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: —from the member for Morphett because he knows that, indeed, we consult because we believe you should listen to the community's views. There is none of the massive heavy-handed behaviour of the last government; none of the 'you take it or leave it' attitude to schools opening or closing. We believe in consultation and, funny about that, we have allowed more than a

year to consult, because we want schools to understand what is on the horizon. We want them to prepare for this policy change because, in reality, we want only one outcome: the best for all our children.

We are a government driven by educational achievement, and we want every dollar to be spent on children's education in order to get the best in literacy and the best rates of retention and attendance. Let us get this straight. It must gall members opposite to know we are spending and investing in public education. We know that there are relatively small schools with relatively small amounts of their own savings derived from chook raffles—which are exempt; we would never, ever touch chook raffle money—but we also know that the money that has been sent to schools to spend on this year's children has not been spent. We will negotiate with school councils; we will speak to them and we will help them to understand the best way to invest money. In fact—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: —since we are investing \$82 million on restructuring schools, there is a real opportunity for those small schools that might have more than a million dollars to look at a project on which they might like to spend it, because the reality is that the money is in their bank account. All we have said is that today's money should be spent on today's children. I, personally, find it extraordinary that a relatively small school would have more than \$1 million in its bank account. I find it extraordinary, because that money—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: This is not a hippie colony.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Speaker is on his feet. I expect the house to come to order immediately. There is too much interjecting from members on my left. The minister will be heard in silence. Minister.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I will briefly say that the money that has come to them has come from state government funds. It is state government money which has been given to the school to spend on the children currently enrolled in the school. If my children were at a school where that money was being banked and not spent on my children, I would want to know why.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Education change her policy to take interest from schools if the schools reject the idea as part of a consultation process?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): Mr Speaker, it is a four day old story. The budget has been proposed by the government. Now it is entirely up to the parliament as to whether or not it passes the budget.

PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Treasurer. Will there be targeted voluntary separation packages for public sector employees? The Treasurer and Treasury officers in the budget lock-up told journalists there would be voluntary redundancies and separation packages (this was widely reported in the media), yet on Friday the Minister Assisting the Premier in Cabinet Business and Public Sector Management said there would be

no TVSP packages and job reductions would be achieved through attrition.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I heard the minister for cabinet business make it very clear there is no TVSP scheme now, and that is correct—there is none. It is quite a logical and simple process. As we announced on Thursday in the budget, we would argue, and I believe, this is an exciting opportunity for the state public sector. We are embarking upon the single most significant public sector reform in the state's history. That is, we will consolidate, possibly into one entity, the shared services of government—that is, the corporate functions of government such as HR, payroll, records management and procurement. All those types of functions will be performed by the one entity. We hope that should free up \$60 million of recurrent savings per year. As this is not an exact science, that is our best estimate, but a conservative estimate. As I said in the media on Friday, there is the potential for savings to be larger than that but, in prudent budgeting management terms, we are factoring in \$60 million.

In relation to public sector TVSPs, it is quite simple. This is a program that will be phased in over four years. With the natural attrition rate in government and the types of jobs involved, we are hopeful that people who are displaced in this exercise will pick up a job through natural attrition. But, if at the end of the day there are not sufficient alternative employment opportunities, then at that point—and only at that point, well down the track—would the government consider a very limited and targeted voluntary separation package. It is quite simple and quite consistent with what we said on Thursday.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: My question is again to the Treasurer. Will the cost of the targeted voluntary separation packages to be offered during this term of government have to be met by departmental budget without additional funding from Treasury?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I just refer to my previous answer. What an illogical, silly question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

FOSTER CARE

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Families and Communities inform the house why foster carers are being left with the legal responsibility for any mistaken administration of medication to infants placed in their care? On 27 June, I asked the minister why a foster carer would be legally liable (as had been identified in correspondence from his department) for a mistake in administering morphine to an infant placed in her care when the foster carer had not been forwarded or given instruction by the department as to how to administer the morphine. On that day, the minister responded:

Clearly, it seems, that, in this case, the parent has not felt supported, and I have asked that the matter be looked into as a matter of urgency.

We have had no response.

The SPEAKER: Order! The explanation is unnecessary. The Minister for Families and Communities.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): Thank you, Mr Speaker—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There is a campaign, I have noticed, emerging in *The Australian*. I watched with interest as it went from state to state looking for the inevitable horror stories that exist in child protection systems across the nation. I was waiting for our turn to come and, of course, here it is today. It happens to be something that was raised—asked and answered—in this parliament a few weeks ago. Never mind, it is apparently news. Of course, it is important for the opposition to come in here and reprise it to do something that it could never achieve, that is, get it into the newspaper.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Well, what I said at the time to the house—and I repeat to the house—is that this foster carer did not feel supported. It is obvious that she did not. I do not acknowledge any of the factual material that has been put in the public sphere about this matter, and it is an appalling slur on our hospitals—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: —our midwives who work closely with drug-affected children, our CYFS workers who support those families and the other people who work in the system to support families who are afflicted in this most serious way. I can just imagine what would be said about us if we had left a child in the care of a family and something awful had taken place. We take a child out of these circumstances on an emergency basis. They are taken into care and then they are found a foster parent who we believe is suitable to carry out the task. I am sorry that this foster parent felt unsupported.

I have committed myself to find ways in which we can ensure that foster parents who do this magnificent service on behalf of the state feel better supported by our department. However, it is an improper slur to come into this place and point the finger at the departmental employees who work in the most difficult of circumstances, putting themselves into families where there are these horrible things happening, knowing that they always run the risk of people in this place pointing the finger at them.

VACSWIM

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Frome): My question is to the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing. Why has a contract been given for delivery of Vacswim (the state's learn-to-swim program) without the contract going out to tender as it has in all other years?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing): I will check the detail for the honourable member and report back to the house.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I will ask the question again because the minister does know about it. Will the minister assure the house that Vacswim will be put out to tender next year, and will the minister ensure that an attempt is made to address the alarming drop-off in participation in the program?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: I am not sure why the honourable member has repeated the first part of the question. I said that I will check the detail and get back to the honourable member, and I will—

The Hon. R.G. Kerin interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: Well, if I knew the detail I would tell the honourable member right now. That is a slur he is making against me. I said that I will check the detail of

his question and get back to him. In regard to the second part of the question, of course, we have worked across government in regard to participation rates, whether it be in swimming or any other activity. We will always work hard to increase the participation rate and do our very best in all areas.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: My question is again to the minister—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Will the minister tell the house whether or not his initial reason for the long delay in putting this out to tender and then for its not going to tender was the delay due to the election and the federal government's workplace choices legislation, which is being blamed for everything from global warming to Port Adelaide not winning football matches?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: We know that this is a dopey, lazy opposition. Here we are day one after the budget and they cannot even get through the first question time asking budget questions. Here we have the shadow minister asking the same question on three occasions. On the first occasion he asked his question I said that I would check the detail and I would get back to the member. I have given him that assurance; I will check the detail of the question. He has made some allegations. I will check the nature of those allegations and get back to him. I give him that assurance; I will come back to him.

NATIVE VEGETATION CLEARANCE

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Will the Premier take immediate action to remove the unnecessary restrictions placed on land-holders and land managers which prevent them from constructing effective firebreaks and carrying out hazard reduction programs to lessen the risk of bushfires?

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: If the Treasurer does not think the bushfire risk is important, he is the only one.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stuart will finish asking his question.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Some 12 months ago, the Director of the Country Fire Service, Mr Euan Ferguson, indicated to the Economic and Finance Committee that the provisions of the Native Vegetation Act, which classed burning as clearance, should be removed to help lessen the dangers of bushfires.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I will raise the issue with Mr Ferguson when I speak to him within the next day or two.

ROADS, OUTBACK

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I would like to ask the Minister for Transport a question.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Outback roads.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stuart has the call.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: When the Treasurer has finished entertaining himself, will the minister explain to the house how much state government money is being spent on the proposals to seal 7.5 kilometres of the Wilpena to Blinman

road and the road out of Oodnadatta and the construction and improvement of other roads in the north of South Australia? The minister would be aware that a considerable amount of this money is provided by the federal government from Roads to Recovery. This is a budget question. We would like the minister to tell us exactly how much state government money is being spent?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport): I would have to say that this is probably more a question for estimates when I have a few bureaucrats around me.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: No, we'll talk about the budget, all right. We'll talk about the budget since you have given me the invitation. Can I apologise straight off the top of my head as I am not absolutely certain about the actual expenditure figures on a number of very specific roads. However, what I can say, despite the misinformation peddled by the shadow minister for transport, is that there has been a significant increase in the road maintenance budget. They say, 'We'll talk about the budget.' He was out there saying—what was it—that there was only \$3.4 million extra in road maintenance. I advise the member for Waite that, all up, the state road maintenance budget this year is \$73.9 million—

Mr Hamilton-Smith: Untrue.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON:—that's right; we made it up; we didn't put the money in, we just put the numbers in the budget: that's not true—as opposed to \$68.3 million last year, an increase of, in fact—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Talk about the budget, he said.

Mr WILLIAMS: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has a point of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: This is interesting material, but I am still waiting to hear the answer to the question asked by the member for Stuart.

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

An honourable member interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I point out to members on my left that, having interjected before the minister had barely even begun his answer, it is a bit rich for them to complain about the nature of the minister's answer. The minister has the call.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I will be very brief, sir. This is an increase of \$5.6 million—apparently this is not true; we just make up the budget figures—or 8 per cent, which is substantially more than the shadow minister said—a much more substantial increase than any I can remember their ever giving in their term of government.

CHILDREN, GUARDIANSHIP

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister for Families and Communities. Why is the department refusing to allow five children who live at the Seaford Rise Village and under the guardianship of the minister to attend their mother's wedding on 22 October, when they are allowed a visit for a family barbecue only a few days before?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I can remind the house that there are very good reasons why we do not speak about the details of individual cases—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, because we have the best interests of the children at heart. These children will grow up one day and one of the unfortunate things is that there will be material on the public record here and, potentially, if our friends in the media do not exercise some discretion over how they report cases like this, on the public record in the media, and it is highly deleterious to a group of young people, who I must say are absolutely at risk of very, very serious consequences to their own health and wellbeing—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am very well aware of these families, very well aware of them.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: And the other thing I am very well aware of is how vulnerable they are. I get regular correspondence from a number of these children and they will not be assisted—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL:—by taking their circumstances through a public forum. You're a disgrace.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

POLICE, ASSAULTS

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I table a ministerial statement delivered today in another place by my colleague the Minister for Police.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

CHILDREN, GUARDIANSHIP

Ms CHAPMAN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): In June this year I asked the Minister for Families and Communities to explain to the house why it was that a two month old baby who had been born to a heroin addict mother who has been placed in the care of a foster carer had not been done with a proper briefing to the foster carer and, additionally, what legal liability there would be imposed on the foster carer in the event that there was some maladministration of the medication. We all know that children in this state, and, sadly, across the country, are born sometimes to drug addicted mothers, and it is necessary in the interests of protecting these children that they at least be taken into the temporary care of the minister under his or her guardianship to ensure that they are protected and that they can at least undertake usually between a four and six month program of four-hourly morphine injections to deal with that issue. So it is an important responsibility and it is one which is necessary to protect the child, and it is also one that is necessary for proper briefing to the carer parents.

What happens is that these children, often born in the Women's and Children's Hospital, are there for a few days, they are stabilised, and a place is secured with a foster carer who is willing to undertake this responsibility and a briefing

is undertaken. On this occasion it is claimed by the foster carer that that did not take place and that she was concerned about the lack of briefing and that she did seek some clarification from the department. She wrote to the minister, and representatives and advocates for her wrote to the minister, and they got a clear indication from the minister's department that there was a legal obligation and it would rest with them.

When I asked the minister on 27 June for some clarification of that, what did we get; what did foster carers in South Australia get in a response from the very minister who has the responsibility for these children and accountability to this department? We got a load of abuse for raising a specific case. What has happened in the meantime? Not until we get this on the front page of *The Australian* newspaper is there any attempt by the department to deal with this matter.

What did we see last week, Madam Acting Speaker? After eight months of being on notice of this issue, we finally have a budget; a budget which does not even mention families and communities, or the hundreds of children who are in foster care, or the thousands of children who are lining up at the Mullighan Inquiry, or the hundreds of other children who were the subject of the Layton Report. What contribution do we have from the Treasurer in the budget speech on families and communities about the most vulnerable children in this state? Absolutely zero.

What extra money have we been given to provide for the support of the hundreds of foster carers who are looking after these children? Zero. What money has been allocated to refurbish the offices of the new Families SA, to put extra furniture in this new Adelaide district office? \$4.6 million. That is what we have. That is the priority of this government. They think that desks, paintings and redecoration are more important than the children in this state. It is an absolute outrage. It is a shame on this government that they continue to refuse to recognise the importance of these children.

We have had the Layton Report and the Mullighan Inquiry; we have had budget after budget—five budgets under this government—and none of them have successfully addressed this issue. Clearly, they do not care.

EXPORTS

Mr BIGNELL (Mawson): Thank you Madam Deputy Speaker. Today I would like to inform the house of the enormous potential for South Australian products to be exported to Russia. In late July I visited Russia on a trip which I funded myself to gain an understanding of the export possibilities—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr BIGNELL: I note the interjection. There are plenty of fine products from the member for Hammond's electorate. I wanted to gain an understanding of the export possibilities in one of the world's largest and largely untapped economies. Moscow and St Petersburg are brilliant; not just for their amazing historical significance, but for the significant role they could play in South Australia's future. They are very different cities from the perception that many South Australians would have of these places. While many may think of Russia and conjure up images of long lines and empty shelves in their retail precincts, nothing could be further from the truth. Russia is in the midst of an economic boom, and South Australian companies could do worse than investigate the opportunities to sell products in Russia.

Moscow is now the world's most expensive city in which to live, surpassing Tokyo, New York, Zurich and other world economic powerhouses. Russians buy more Rolls Royces than every other country in the world combined. The streets are full of late-model Mercedes, BMWs and other top European cars.

Members interjecting:

Mr BIGNELL: It's a very big Unley. All the top fashion brands such as Versace and Dior have many stores in Moscow, and Russians spend 70 to 80 per cent of their income each week. They are keen to spend their money on quality products such as fine food and wine: two commodities that we have in abundance in the electorate of Mawson. McLaren Vale and Willunga are recognised throughout Australia and many places in the world for their fine wines and food. For the second consecutive year, McLaren Vale has won the Jimmy Watson Trophy (thanks to Shingleback), and the Hyatt Advertiser Award was won by Fox Creek, much to the chagrin of the member for Schubert.

I would like to see Russians enjoying those wines so I have been spreading the word of that possibility in the Russian market, because increased exports mean more money for the South Australian economy and more jobs for the southern part of Adelaide. In Moscow I met with Austrade's Dan Tebbutt, Nina Mitropolskaya, Natasha Smirnova and Sergey Kask to discuss the potential for food and wine exports from South Australia to Russia. Their knowledge and enthusiasm was outstanding, and I am sure that, thanks to their efforts, we will soon see South Australian companies reaping the rewards of selling quality products in the booming Russian market.

I have already spoken to a number of wine marketers in the McLaren Vale area and they are keen to find out more. We are putting them in touch with the people of Austrade, which has a specialist food and wine person in its office in Moscow.

Mr Venning: They love red wine.

Mr BIGNELL: The member for Schubert points out that they love red wine. They do love it. One of the hotels had an Australian wine on the menu. It sells back here for \$10 to \$15 a bottle and they had it on the menu for \$US60 a bottle. When asked why they were selling it at such a high price, they said that they could not sell it at \$US30 a bottle, so they put it at \$US60 and they cannot keep up with the demand. It is one of the markets where people are being educated, but they are price sensitive towards the top end rather than the lower end of the price scale.

I have written to the Premier to see whether the South Australian government could help facilitate a delegation of South Australian wine and food producers to travel to Russia to show off our produce to retailers, sommeliers, chefs and restaurants. While I have been talking to the people in Mawson, if the members for Schubert and MacKillop (from where the fine Coonawarra wines come) and other members in this place would like to find out more, I would be happy to pass on the information I have gained. We would all benefit by beefing up the South Australian brand in Russia.

Last week I spoke to Hagen Stehr, the General Manager of Clean Seas based in Port Lincoln, which exports kingfish, tuna and other fish to Japan and Europe. Almost every restaurant I went to in Russia—and it did not matter whether it was a Georgian restaurant or a traditional Russian restaurant—had a separate menu for sushi. Fish, particularly raw fish, is in huge demand. What we farm off Port Lincoln through Clean Seas and other companies over there is the

cleanest and best fish you can get anywhere in the world. Between Port Lincoln and Antarctica is beautiful, pristine, clean water, which Europe and the northern hemisphere countries cannot match. I have passed that on to Hagan and he is keen to join us if we get a delegation together, and I am happy to have many people from many different electorates on it. The education and tourism sector could also benefit greatly by talking to the Russians and seeing whether we can get tourists and students to come out from Russia to learn in South Australia.

Time expired.

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I have been very disturbed and annoyed since last week's comments by the Attorney in the house which, in my view, sought to make cheap political points regarding the new Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be unveiled in Adelaide next month. I was hesitant to come into the house and respond because I think the comments he made are beneath contempt, but the fact that he has put them into the public arena warrants a response.

The house is well aware that I served for 24 years as an officer in the Army, commencing in the final years of the Vietnam conflict. Though my training was still under way as the war came to an end, I served most of my career with many Vietnam veterans—and fine men they are. I well remember orders being given not to wear our uniforms in public. I remember being spat on in the street and abused in uniform and, in particular, I remember the role played by senior Labor Party figures such as Don Dunstan, Bob Hawke and many other Labor MPs in the moratorium marches and violent demonstrations in Adelaide and elsewhere. I well remember them outside this house. I remember left-leaning political activists and student groups aligned to Labor abusing our soldiers and blaming veterans in personal attacks as the troops returned to Australia and subsequently. I remember the welcome home parades, the buckets full of pigs' blood—all instigated by the lunatic left of politics at the time. Labor politicians fuelled the anti-Vietnam rhetoric leading up to the 1972 federal election, the 'It's time' election, and in my view were far from circumspect in their approach to veterans and their efforts to calm tensions.

It therefore rankles me to see a Labor politician now attempting to rewrite Labor history. Mr Atkinson would be well advised to spend some time researching his party's role in the problems many veterans and their families experienced during the 1960s and 1970s. His effort in parliament last week to distance himself from the communist government in Vietnam sits strangely coming from a representative of a party whose members still call each other 'comrade'. I remember Gough Whitlam coming down here after the 1997 election and addressing the party faithful with such rhetoric. Labor is proud of its roots in international socialism, with a history of close relationships with communist and socialist regimes around the world going back to the 1940s, though it may not be fashionable to profile that heritage today. Members would be well advised to review the history of the votes to ban the Communist Party and the role Labor politicians took during those debates.

As a Liberal frontbencher and shadow minister for multicultural affairs, I will be attending the unveiling of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and proudly standing side by side with both Australian and South Vietnamese veterans who served their countries and their governments bravely. The

federal Liberal government has its own obligations and responsibilities in respect of the current government of Vietnam, and it can speak for itself. It would be very interesting to gauge shadow foreign minister Kevin Rudd's official view on behalf of the federal Labor Party about the matter of the sensitivities of the current government of Vietnam.

In my view, the Attorney's recent effort was an attempt at the very thing he claims to be condemning. He sought to make cheap political points for the state Labor Party out of Vietnam veterans. They truly have had enough. In his own words, 'They are being betrayed again.' I put it to the house that that has been done by the Attorney during question time. What he has done is stir up a whole lot of bad memories in an effort to curry favour for political purposes. Rather than act deliberately to inflame and politicise the unveiling of the memorial by using it as an opportunity to attack Liberals, a responsible government minister would be better advised to recognise the sensitivities of all parties and adopt a non-partisan, supportive approach to veterans, both Australian and Vietnamese, and their families.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Morphet.

Dr McFETRIDGE: I will give way to Steph any time.

WORKCHOICES LEGISLATION

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Ashford): I thank the member for Morphet. I think we have a mutual admiration thing going on. We work very closely together, and it is great having him as a member across the way.

Today, I would like to talk about the evil (as I see it) WorkChoices legislation. I am really concerned to see that the workers at Radio Rentals are forced to be on a picket line because they tried to negotiate an enterprise bargaining agreement. To me, this seems completely outrageous. It is very sad that, under WorkChoices, they can now be locked out of their workplace. I am also sad because, probably for a number of people in this chamber, Radio Rentals has been a service that has helped people get some of the luxuries of life they would not have been able to get otherwise. From conversations I have had with members in this place, Radio Rentals has provided a credit reference for people to go on and purchase a home and develop a credit rating because they had hire purchase services from Radio Rentals.

I think that a number of people will decide not to use Radio Rentals any more because of this dispute. I think it will backfire big time on the company. There are now alternative facilities, and I expect that a number of people will take the decision not to use Radio Rentals because of this dispute and the unwise decision management has taken in regard to the workers who are now on a picket line and locked out of their workplace.

I was also interested to read that there are some real concerns about WorkChoices for small and medium businesses. I am always interested to find out how such businesses are faring in South Australia, especially as I come from a family involved in small and medium businesses. My siblings actually run very successful businesses, and I often hear from them about some of the ridiculous things that have been introduced by the Howard government and also its enforcer of bad industrial relations practice, minister Kevin Andrews, the workplace relations minister. It is almost an oxymoron to have him as a workplace relations minister.

More recently, a number of companies have raised concerns. In particular, I refer to Dean Morelli, Managing

Director of Aussiepay, a payroll outsourcing company, who says that mini, small and medium enterprises that he has dealt with have been unaware of the new obligations introduced on 27 September which require employers to keep detailed records of hours worked and that non-compliance with these new rules can attract fines of up \$2 750 for each offence. Mr Morelli said:

These are pretty dramatic changes, and there are precious few pieces of software available for managing them.

So, whilst WorkChoices has introduced a number of hurdles for small businesses to comply with, the technology actually is not there for many of these businesses to be able to comply with what is being asked of them. Even coalition sources are said by the *Financial Review* to be concerned about some of the problems that WorkChoices have raised.

Government sources have said that the aim is to ensure that small businesses, which have previously not been required to keep detailed records, would not be hit by the new rules. But surprise, surprise, small and medium businesses are now complaining that they are not able—because what the government is asking them to do is so impractical—to keep up with these rules. Tony Stevens, the chief of the Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia, is reported as saying that his members have identified a number of smaller issues that require definition and that he will raise this at his next meeting with workplace relations minister Kevin Andrews. So, as many members on this side have said with regard to the WorkChoices legislation, it is now the very people who are supposed to support the coalition government who are now complaining as well.

Time expired.

TOURISM

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): I would like to give credit where it is due today. The Minister for Tourism made an announcement about tourism experiences in South Australia. I am glad she used the word ‘experiences’—it is also used in a number of brochures to which she referred—because I have been saying to many people over many months that the big future for South Australia is the experience industry, which involves tourism, sport, arts, culture and music. It is the way of life in South Australia, and you really have to experience South Australia to appreciate it.

There are some people who say that in South Australia you can dig it up. The Chamber of Mines has said we have an exploration boom, not a mining boom, but in the light of today’s announcement from BHP I think we have a mining boom as well. Aquaculture is booming, but as a result of the drought there are some issues; and, unfortunately, both mining and agriculture are dependent upon the vagaries of commodity prices and nature.

The other thing you can do in South Australia is that you can think about: the thinking industry (the education industry) is a huge earner for South Australia. As an export earner, international education is the fourth biggest industry in Australia. It is fantastic, and that is another big opportunity for South Australia. But the really big one for South Australia is the experience industry. You can experience South Australia. I ask this government not to continue to allow tourism in South Australia to go down a slippery slope. I hope today is just a small start in promoting South Australia as a fantastic experience. If we do not, we will miss out on our share and people will miss out on experiencing the fantastic place that is South Australia.

I had the opportunity to go overseas as part of a study tour and talk to a number of tourism operators. I spoke to the Guggenheim Museum in New York, and they are absolutely keen as mustard to come to the southern hemisphere. When I talked to them about South Australia they were very keen to come here. It is big money, but you need vision. You need a 10-year vision when you are talking to these people, and we have the perfect site and that is west of the Morphett Street bridge. I also went to the National Space Centre in Leicester in England where there was a Blue Streak rocket from Woomera on display. Again, a national space museum in the precinct west of the Morphett Street bridge would be fantastic. It would be the Andy Thomas national space museum, and I can see it now.

The museum that really grabbed me was in upstate New York, in Rochester, and that is the Strong National Museum of Play. This builds on what Malcolm Buckley and Joan Hall pushed in this house for a number of years, and that was a museum for children. You can look up on the internet the Helen Strong museum of play. It has a number of displays of children’s toys and other circus artefacts, but the main part of the museum is an educational, interactive number of locations for children to learn, and it illustrates to parents and grandparents the opportunities of learning through play. We have an opportunity to build something like that in the precinct in North Terrace. It is only a concept and I do not have any costings on it yet, but this is the sort of vision we need for South Australia. We do not want it wet and wild. We want to show an experience here that is truly unique, and certainly things such as a national space museum and national play museum would add to the experience of South Australia.

Ecotourism experiences are mentioned in one of the brochures I have here. I am going to Rawnsley Park on the long weekend and I will stay in one of the eco-villas there. It has been described by Tony Smith, Tim Fischer and other tourism operators as five-star accommodation. When you lie in bed you can look out the window in the ceiling above and see 5 million stars. So there are five stars below and 5 million stars above. That is an ecotourism experience not to be missed.

The cycling experiences, cruising the coast and river experiences, and the conservation experiences that we have all the time in South Australia are unforgettable. I congratulate the tourism industry on the work it is doing, because without this industry (which employs 30 000 people in South Australia; it is a \$4 billion industry) we would not have anything to boast about—and we certainly do have things to boast about in South Australia. All we have to do is spend money on managing and marketing tourism and showcase the experiences we have available in South Australia and the tourists will come. If this government is half-smart, it will look at opportunities with long-term vision, not just watch the budget coffers. It will entice people here so that not only can developers and business people experience the boom in South Australia but also we can benefit from the tourism boom.

OZONE LAYER

Mr O’BRIEN (Napier): Through the late 1980s and 1990s the depletion of the ozone layer was a major environmental concern that received large-scale media attention. Last night this issue was featured on television news services yet again, with an expansion in the size of the ozone layer above the Antarctic at its greatest extent ever. Scientists have put this down to extremely cold conditions in the Antarctic and

predict that within the next 20 years there will be a complete closing of that hole. This is largely as a result of actions that we have taken in the preceding 20 years.

I raise this topic today because it demonstrates that when governments of the world act in a cooperative manner it is possible to reverse seemingly insurmountable environmental issues. Climate changes pose a similar threat, and lessons can be learnt from how the world has successfully dealt with the depletion of the ozone layer. When confronted with the reality of the hole in the ozone layer and the effect that it was having on human life and the environment, the world reacted by enacting a number of multilateral agreements to phase out ozone-depleting substances—in particular, CFCs, which were once used in almost all refrigeration and air-conditioning systems as well as in aerosol cans.

The central agreement was the Montreal Protocol signed in 1987 (around 20 years ago) and substantially amended in 1990, 1992 and 1997. The Montreal Protocol sets out different time lines for compliance in the developed world and in the developing world. In addition, in 1990, a multilateral fund was established to provide funds to help developing countries comply by financing the conversion of existing manufacturing processes, trained personnel and the establishment of national ozone offices. By April 2006, some \$US2 billion had been poured into the multinational fund.

The Montreal Protocol has worked, and it is frequently hailed as the most successful environmental protection agreement ever implemented. The differential time lines for compliance are widely seen as pivotal to the success of the agreement and provide a model for dealing with climate change. The 1997 Kyoto Protocol (which came into effect on 16 February 2005) is founded on the same principles of differentiated targets based on a country's particular economic circumstances.

The developed world must cut its combined greenhouse gas emissions to 5 per cent below 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012. Far less demanding reductions have been imposed on the developing world. Even within the developed world, some leeway was granted to Australia, Denmark and Iceland, which need limit greenhouse gas emissions to only 108 per cent of the 1990 base line, and that is a reflection of our particular economic circumstances. As is widely reported, Australia and the United States are the only two countries that have not ratified the treaty.

That Australia would not partake in the Kyoto treaty is staggering, because we are a major contributor to climate change and will be affected to a far greater degree than most other countries. Even a slight increase in temperatures would have dire consequences for Australia (particularly South Australia with its high dependence on what is already marginal agricultural land), yet, according to the International Energy Agency data released at the end of 1999, Australia is, on a per capita basis, the third highest emitter of greenhouse gasses behind only Luxembourg and the United States.

By refusing to enact Kyoto, the Howard government is essentially allowing a situation where we are contributing to our own demise. South Australia cannot sign a Kyoto treaty because international obligations are constitutionally in the commonwealth's jurisdiction. However, in the face of complete inaction by the federal government, we will introduce the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Bill, which will legislate a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 60 per cent of 1990 levels by 2050 and boost our use of renewable energy to 20 per cent of total electricity by 2014.

When passed, South Australia will be only the third jurisdiction in the world after California and Alberta to back our policies with a force and status of law.

Time expired.

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION (DRINK SPIKING) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935. Read a first time.

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

That this bill be now read a second time.

On 23 April 2006, the Premier announced that the government would create a specific offence of drink spiking. The announcement responded to a series of recent reports about drink spiking. The (common) media reporting of drink spiking concentrates on allegations of a most serious type of criminal behaviour. That is the supposed addition of a date-rape drug (such as a form of amphetamine) to a drink (commonly an alcoholic drink) without the knowledge of the victim to induce an extremely inebriated state in the victim, with the additional intention of taking sexual advantage of the victim or actually doing so.

Such cases are at the extreme end of the range of this kind of behaviour. Lesser examples may be the addition of strong drink to (say) orange juice or additional alcohol to an already alcoholic drink, such as vodka or grappa to beer, as a so-called 'prank' to make a fool of the victim (at a bucks' party, hens' night, or the like). There is now no separate offence category in any Australian jurisdiction for the act of spiking someone's drink as such. Instead, there is a range of more general offences that depends on the effects of the spiking, the intention with which it is done and the type of substance used to spike the drink such as a poison.

The bill proposes the introduction of a mid-level specific offence to cover what is considered by the Model Criminal Code Officers Committee to be a gap in the law. I seek leave to have the remainder of my second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

In July 2003, the Australian Institute of Criminology (A.I.C.) was commissioned by the Commonwealth Government to conduct a national project on drink spiking. Drink spiking was identified as an emerging issue for examination by the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy and has received much media attention in the last couple of years.

The A.I.C. Report took a very broad view of drink-spiking. According to the A.I.C., the term 'drink spiking' refers to drugs or alcohol being added to a drink (alcoholic or non-alcoholic) without the consent of the person consuming it. For an incident to be defined as drink spiking, it need not involve further criminal victimisation, even though such offences can occur after an incident of drink spiking.

The A.I.C. report:

· found that there is currently no way to determine the exact number of drink spiking incidents that occur. This is owing to—

- (a) high levels of under-reporting, and
- (b) fluctuations in reporting owing to awareness campaigns,
- (c) jurisdictional differences in data recording and extraction procedures and
- (d) difficulty in verifying whether a reported incident actually occurred;

estimated on the basis of victim self-reporting (which is notoriously unreliable) that between 1 July 2002 and 30 June 2003 (i.e. over a 12-month period):

(a) between 3000 and 4000 suspected incidents of drink spiking occurred in Australia;

(b) about one third of these incidents involved sexual assault; and

(c) between 60 and 70 per cent of these incidents involved no additional victimisation.

The A.I.C. report was published in November 2004 and was presented as a report to the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy. The Council referred the legal aspects of the report to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General (SCAG) who, in turn, sought the advice of the Model Criminal Code Officers Committee. The Model Criminal Code Officers Committee have prepared a discussion paper that examines the coverage of existing laws (as they apply to drinking spiking). In the paper the committee recommends the creation of a new offence of drink spiking.

The foundation of the law is a series of offences based on the intentional and reckless causing of harm, serious harm and fatal harm. Harm includes unconsciousness and serious harm includes "serious and protracted impairment of a physical or mental function". There can be little doubt that serious drink-spiking would fall under these categories of offence according to the relevant harm caused and the fault with which it is done. So murder, manslaughter, intentionally or recklessly causing serious harm or mere harm, reckless endangerment of life, serious harm or mere harm are all potentially relevant depending on the circumstances. So too are the severe penalties available under section 18 or 32 of the *Controlled Substances Act* (administration of a drug) depending on the kind of drug administered.

The Model Criminal Code Officers Committee examined the coverage of existing laws (as they apply to drink spiking) and found that, with one exception, these laws that cover drink spiking do so adequately. The weakness in the law lies at the lower end of the scale—prank spiking where there is no additional criminal victimisation.

Where the amount of alcohol or other substance is small, the victim may not be harmed and the act of spiking the victim's drink may not have recklessly endangered the victim's life or created a risk of harm to the victim. None of the more general offences against the person would apply.

If the spiking agent is a prohibited drug, it may be an offence against the *Controlled Substances Act*. However, the offences of the administration of drugs found in the *Controlled Substances Act* are not really designed for this purpose (being aimed at consensual drug-using behaviour), and the massively complicated classification and scheduling of drugs means that the application of these offences is difficult to fathom. In any event, the over-administration of alcohol (and other, slightly more exotic, things) does not fall within the scope of existing administration offences.

Therefore, MCCOC recommended that all Australian jurisdictions enact an offence of drink-spiking (without further intent) and that the offence extend to any substance (any classification of poison, substance, drug, alcohol, traditional aphrodisiac) that is likely to impair the consciousness or bodily function of the victim, or which is intended to do so, whether or not the spiked drink is drunk wholly, partly or at all.

The Bill address the problem of drink-spiking and goes one step further. That extra step is food-spiking.

The Government believes that a person should not escape prosecution simply because he or she administered a drug or other substance by food rather than drink. Food spiking is no less dangerous and no less abhorrent than drink-spiking. The Bill therefore applies equally to both food and drink-spiking.

I commend the Bill to Members.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Part 1—Preliminary

1—Short title

2—Commencement

3—Amendment provisions

These clauses are formal.

Part 2—Amendment of *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935*

4—Insertion of Part 3 Division 7C

This clause inserts a new Division into Part 3 of the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935* as follows:

Division 7C—Food and beverage spiking

32C—Spiking of food or beverages

This provision creates an offence of adding a substance, or causing a substance to be added, to any food or beverage intending to cause, or being recklessly indifferent as to causing, impairment of the consciousness or bodily function of another person who will or might consume the food or beverage without knowing of the presence of the substance. The maximum penalty for the offence is imprisonment for 3 years.

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

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 21 September. Page 951.)

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): This is not a Liberal budget: this is a Rann budget. It is high taxing; it is big spending; it is increasing debt; it sells assets; it is low growth; it slashes jobs; it snubs small business; and it snubs regional South Australia. It contains no payroll tax reform, no land tax reform, no reform of WorkCover, no help for families, no help for pensioners or self-funded retirees, no help for small business, no help for first-home buyers, no focus on jobs growth and no focus on population growth. This is a Rann budget: it is not a Liberal budget. It is a budget of broken promises and missed opportunities.

Immediately after the 2002 election, the Treasurer bragged about having the moral fibre to break his promises. At least I can say he is consistent. He has gone and done it again. There are at least three areas in this budget where the Premier and Treasurer have broken their promises: a promise not to reduce Public Service numbers; a promise not to seek savings in health, law and order and education; and a promise not to reduce teacher numbers. These three broken promises deserve some attention. There are issues of asset sales and privatisation, and I will come to those later. The Public Service cuts announced in this budget show the government is both complacent and arrogant. Having spent the whole election promising everyone, including Jan McMahan, the Secretary of the Public Service Association, the media and others that they would not cut the Public Service, there are now around 2 000 positions budgeted to go. There well could be more.

Many members may remember the interview the Treasurer did with ABC Radio on 16 March 2006, some two days before the election. During the interview, the Treasurer said:

We at this point are looking at about 800 additional vital public servants in our promises to date. That is 400 police, 100 teachers, 44 medical specialists.

ABC reporter Matthew Abraham responded by asking him: 'And you won't fund those by getting rid of other jobs?' The Treasurer responded with an emphatic no. However, the Treasurer has once again proved that he has the moral fibre to break his promises. I think he sees it as a virtue.

The first part of their broken promises was immediately after the state election. Straight after this state election, 390 public servants, whom the minister described on 5AA in May 2006 as basically rattling around the Public Service without proper jobs, were offered voluntary separation packages. This was against everything that was said during the election campaign. Members may well ask: if there were 390 public servants rattling around the Public Service without proper jobs, why did it take the government four years to find them?

The answer is that they were lazy and complacent ministers. If the government really believes that these public servants really did not have proper jobs then more than \$26 million has been wasted each and every year due to the government's poor management and failure to act earlier on that particular issue. This revelation was followed by the Public Service cap, the interim cap, the freeze, the interim freeze farce that occurred in question time when the Treasurer eventually mentioned that they were talking about having a Clayton's cap. This is, of course, while the government went about delaying the budget by an unprecedented four months.

I think it is now clear to everyone, particularly the Public Service, that this farce was part of a strategy to reduce the Public Service during the delay. The government says it will have more public servants in June 2010 than at June 2006. The question is: how many did the government get rid of between the election and the June 2006 benchmark? How many did they dump during that four month period? That figure has never been made public by the government. And you will have to wait, of course, for the fiddle with the Modbury Hospital when they bring those staff back in to the Public Service to count them as extra numbers.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: That is about 600 or 700, I understand. Finally, just last week the budget reveals that around 1 570 public sector jobs are to be cut. This is in addition to the 222 public servants who accepted separation packages in the government's first round of cuts before June 2006. Exactly how these 1 570 will leave the Public Service remains somewhat unclear, but one thing is certain: they are going to be cut. In the budget lock-up Treasurer Kevin Foley made it clear that targeted voluntary separation packages would be offered to public servants as part of the process of achieving the cuts. This was widely reported in the media. However, by the next day the Minister Assisting the Premier in Public Sector Management, Jay Weatherill, claimed that jobs would be cut through natural attrition, 'and there are no plans to offer redundancy packages in the public sector'. We note today his answer in question time: it would appear that minister Weatherill may have been wrong in his public comments.

The Public Service, of course, and the people of South Australia were promised no cuts. We now know that almost 2 000 jobs will go and the Treasurer has firmly left the door open for more sackings later on in this term if they need to be. The Treasurer and Premier have again misled the people of South Australia during the campaign. The reduction in the Public Service is a fundamental breach of faith with the people of South Australia. The Premier and Treasurer will run around, of course, claiming that they never made this promise. That, of course, is rubbish. Does anyone seriously believe that the Public Service Association would not have gone public before the election if the government had failed to guarantee them that there would be no cuts in the Public Service? I seem to recall they made comments about our policy. There is absolutely no doubt that the Public Service Association would have gone public before the election if the government had not given them that guarantee.

So let us be absolutely crystal clear: that promise was firm as far as the Public Service Association went, and that promise was firm as far as the people of South Australia went, and there is no doubt that this government has breached that most fundamental of promises. The management of the public sector by the government has been a disgrace. The Treasurer himself concedes that the portfolio has been poorly

managed. In a gross understatement in early September the Treasurer said, and I quote:

But we do not walk away from the fact that managing the numbers in the public sector has not been as good as it should have been.

On that, Mr Speaker, the Treasurer and I agree. During the term of this government we have seen six reviews of the Public Service during the five years, with the Goss review currently on the way. There was the Fahey report, handed to the government of course, undertaken by the Kerin government. There was the Review of the Economic Development Board. There was the Menadue report, the Intergenerational Review of the Health System in 2003. There was the Speakman/Payze report into the Public Service, and the Smith report into the public sector finance and expenditure. We await the Goss report, with eagerness, in 18 months' time. But why do we need six reports in five years? As early as 2004 in his budget reply speech the then leader of the Opposition raised concerns about blow-out in the public sector.

The Premier and Treasurer need to explain how they let the number of public servants blow out above budget and now total an extra 7 750 full-time equivalents over budget. How did this happen? The media seem reluctant to ask the Premier and the Treasurer this question. The cost of this blow-out is estimated at more than \$500 million per year, or more than \$2 billion over a four-year period. How did that cost happen? The government budgeted for some 1 135 additional public servants, but because of mismanagement now has 8 885 extra. How did that happen? How did it happen? Only a relatively small percentage of these additional public sector employees will be police, doctors, nurses and teachers. In fact, the Auditor-General's reports, the government media releases and documents obtained under freedom of information reveal that the net increase of teachers, nurses, doctors and police might be as low as only 1 000 of those nearly 9 000. The government has certainly missed the opportunity to better invest around \$500 million per year.

Let us take a minute to put that into some perspective. What would \$500 million per year get us? Perhaps the children in the member for Flinders' electorate would not have to be crowded into the school bus aisles, and perhaps they might be wearing seatbelts. Perhaps we could have afforded the dual-lane highway from Adelaide to Victor Harbor, and perhaps we could have considered a desalination plant to address South Australia's water issues. Perhaps we could have seen the actual construction of some major road projects. Perhaps we could have reduced the tax burden on South Australian pensioners, businesses and families. All these options are missed opportunities for the people of South Australia.

It is clear that, during the period between the election and the budget, the government has been flat out reducing Public Service numbers. The delay was clearly a tool to hide what was always intended to be a budget that slashed the Public Service. The promise to protect the Public Service was one of the great lies of the Labor election campaign.

The Treasurer also made promises in relation to key agencies, including Health, Education, Families and Communities, Police and Corrections, that they would be immune from efficiency dividends. The budget reveals this is another broken promise. In the next four years, overall health-saving initiatives total more than \$82 million and include an efficiency dividend of some \$47 million. In education, overall savings initiatives total some \$170 million, an efficiency

dividend of \$36 million. In Families and Communities, there are overall savings around some \$36 million, including an efficiency dividend of around \$6 million. In Police, the efficiency dividend has been set at \$9.7 million, and overhead costs reduced by some \$2.7 million. In Correctional Services, the efficiency dividend is set at \$1.9 million, with overhead costs targeted to be reduced by something like \$1.4 million. These are all broken promises. Why would we now believe anything that the Premier or the Treasurer have to say? Why would South Australia believe anything they have to say?

The other issue is that of teacher numbers. The government has promised no reduction in teacher numbers. Community members who have spoken to me simply do not believe that, if you close 17 schools, you will not reduce teacher numbers. The government claims that it has met all its election promises. It has not met its most fundamental promise and that was to be honest to the people of South Australia. That comes as no surprise, because this budget continues the pattern of broken promises by this government and this Treasurer.

During the 2002 election Labor promised not to increase poker machine taxes, but as soon as they came to government they did. They wined and dined the Hotels Association and even put it in writing to them, but as soon as they got to government they changed that promise. They promised cheaper electricity prices, but South Australia is still waiting for cheaper electricity prices. South Australians have very good cause not to believe anything the Premier or Treasurer say.

This budget is a budget of missed opportunities. The Rann government is the highest taxing government in the state's history, continuing the tradition of high taxing Labor governments around Australia. This government has \$2.7 billion more to spend every year than did the former Liberal government—\$2.7 billion more to spend every year.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Sad, sad, sad.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Attorney interjects, 'Sad, sad, sad.' I am sure the people in his electorate like paying the high level of taxation to the Rann Labor government. This government is drowning in money. This budget provided the government with a real opportunity to relieve taxes on South Australian families and South Australian businesses, but Labor just keeps on taxing. It is a high taxing Labor government all over again.

It is these opportunities—the opportunities that have been wasted by Labor—that I now want to take some time to address. South Australia is a small business state. There are 80 000 small businesses in South Australia and they are the engine room of the state's economy—a significant employer, especially of young people. With my many years experience in running a small business I know how state taxes and charges can hurt small businesses and employment opportunities. Small business has been taken for granted by Labor. Again, the government is absolutely flushed with money, but what is in the budget for small businesses? Two things: increased costs and no tax relief.

What incentives are there in the budget to encourage small business to grow? The answer is: none. Payroll tax is a major employment disincentive, with many small businesses resisting taking on new staff to avoid going over the threshold. It was reported in *The Advertiser* of 22 September that even the Treasurer admits that we need to keep business taxes lower in this state if we are to keep pace with our interstate competitors. Our South Australian businesses remain

burdened with the highest payroll tax regime in the country and the payroll tax threshold remains the lowest at some \$504 000, with a rate of about 5.5 per cent. Many other states do not charge payroll tax until the payroll reaches \$1 million or more. This gives these small businesses a huge advantage over their South Australian competitors.

The government has budgeted to take \$840 million in payroll out of businesses this financial year. By the end of this term of government the estimates suggest that payroll tax will be nearly a billion dollars a year on the South Australian business community under this government. That money could be used for businesses to spend on innovation and technology to enable them to compete in international markets. It could have been spent on employing young South Australians but, instead, this money will be paid in tax.

After all the media hype, all the public meetings and all the gratuitous words by the government, it has done nothing with land tax. Land tax collections are set to increase from \$140 million in 2001-02 to \$342 million in 2006-07—a \$200 million tax increase. The land tax revenue from the private sector has increased by around 21 to 22 per cent this year alone. The estimated land tax grab from the private sector in 2006-07 will be around \$193 million, compared with \$76 million in 2001-02.

In total, the government intends to collect more than \$1 billion in property taxes each and every year over the next four years. In 2001-02 the government collected something like \$731 million—a significant increase of \$250 million each and every year. The Treasurer has continued the game of underestimating the revenue collections by the government. During the past four years he has generally underestimated total revenues by close to \$570 million per year. It will be interesting to see if this tactic continues to be used over the forward estimates periods.

South Australia has one of the highest WorkCover levies in South Australia and the unfunded liability has blown out from \$67 million when the Liberal Party left government to \$617 million in December 2005. The budget contains no proposals for reform of WorkCover, so another opportunity to make a difference and a real investment in economic development has been lost to this state. South Australia has to grow its economy, and a key component of any growth will be improving the competitiveness of our small business sector. We have 80 000 of them in South Australia. How does the government expect small business to grow when it is burdened by uncompetitive rates of payroll tax, property tax and WorkCover levies?

This budget represents a missed opportunity for the government to help small business. Small business has been snubbed by this government and snubbed by this budget. This is a government swimming in money and it is doing nothing at all to help the employers in the community. The government is flushed with money, but the budget contains no reductions in, or any concessions for, property taxes, levies or charges for our self-funded retirees and our pensioners. As I understand the budget, the \$150 payment made to senior citizens last year has now been scrapped. Senior citizens under this government will be worse off, not better off.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: If the honourable member has further information, that is interesting. However, my understanding is that the \$150 has been scrapped. The budget is filled with missed opportunities for our youth. Youth unemployment is around 28 per cent, and the government's response is to increase TAFE fees. The budget has seen

TAFE training fees increase from \$1.50 to \$2 an hour, which is a jump of 33 per cent. Combined with the Rann government's 2003 increase, TAFE fees have doubled under Mike Rann—the self-styled education Premier. A 100 per cent increase in TAFE fees does little to encourage TAFE enrolments. The 2005-06 target of 60 per cent of TAFE students finding a job after completing a course has been decreased to 55 per cent after the budget revealed that only 50 per cent of those leaving TAFE last year were able to gain employment.

There is no reduction in stamp duty for first home buyers, and there is no good news for young South Australians looking to buy their first home. Housing affordability is one of the key factors influencing people's decisions to stay in South Australia and grow our population. If we are to keep young South Australians here or attract young people to South Australia, housing affordability is an issue that needs to be addressed. The government's strategy to address housing affordability remains a mystery.

The budget is also a missed opportunity for families, who have been provided with no tax relief. The Emergency Services Levy, the River Murray Levy and the Natural Resource Management Levy all remain in place. I suggest that the house keep an eye on the Natural Resource Management Levy, as I think it might undergo significant growth over the next four years. Sadly, the parents return-to-work program has been dumped by the government.

This budget is a big taxing budget. The Rann government is the highest taxing government in the state's history. In this financial year, the government will receive close to \$500 million extra in revenue than in the previous year. With GST, this government has something like \$2.7 billion more each and every year than did the former Liberal government.

Dr McFetridge: Billion?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Yes; \$2.7 billion. South Australians have a right to ask this government: what are we getting for the \$2.7 billion extra the government is receiving every year? What are we getting in this budget? We are getting asset sales and increased taxes. The Public Service is being slashed, and we are getting budget blow-outs in infrastructure and increased debt—all from a government that has \$2.7 billion more revenue than the last Liberal government in its final year. During the next four years, an additional \$484 million in payroll tax will be collected over and above the 2005-06 figure, and the government will collect almost \$1 billion in payroll tax by 2009-10—a billion-dollar tax on employment in South Australia. Property taxes, of course, have been sustained at more than \$1 billion per year over the forward estimates.

I want to talk a little bit about the debt. What did taxpayers get from the highest taxing government in the state's history? What they got was increased debt. Many constituents have raised concerns about the extra \$700 million debt increase plan over the next four years. They cannot believe that a government which has so much money and which is slashing the Public Service is now increasing debt. They ask: why are they going back into debt to fund things such as opening bridges and trams? The community say that they are the wrong priorities for the state. Business told the government that at the time but, of course, this government does not listen much to business. It comes down to Labor's capacity to manage the economy. The government has been forced to take an axe to the public sector because it could not manage it; the Treasurer admits this. Now he is asking South

Australians to trust him and his capacity to manage an increased debt. It is the same old Labor.

The government claims that it is borrowing to fund transport and other infrastructure. This deserves some comment. Labor's management of transport infrastructure has been nothing short of a fiasco. The transport portfolio has had three ministers and three chief executives over a four-year period. This lack of continuity in leadership has contributed to the numerous blow-outs. All these problems are of the government's own making. It is its management that is to blame. We now have the farcical situation when the blow-outs are even concealed from within the budget.

They will not tell us what the South Road projects will actually cost. They are quite prepared to tell us that the Northern Expressway will cost \$550 million, and a big press conference was held late on a Friday afternoon trying to escape media scrutiny. They give you that figure of \$550 million publicly. They are quite happy to come out and announce, on the front page of *The Advertiser*, the \$138 million in PPP and education, or the \$500 million contribution in relation to prisons, but as to the cost of the two really sensitive issues, where we all know they will have budget blow-outs (the two South Road projects, Anzac Highway and Port Road), the budget papers are silent. I think that really says a lot about this government.

Why would they not provide the latest figures, the latest estimates for the cost of the blow-out of the South Road project? Clearly, the money is in the budget somewhere; it has to be. It has to be in a contingency line, in a provision line or somewhere in the budget, but they will not share that with the parliament. It is hidden in some contingency line. Poor management during the last four years has rendered the budget incapable of funding the blow-outs in transport infrastructure and resulted in increased borrowing. This is not about Labor's good economic management; indeed, it is about its bad economic management. Infrastructure is important for South Australia's economic development. The government's mismanagement of infrastructure has been a disaster, and it has, I think, been one of the really big missed opportunities over the past four years of the Rann government.

In my view, South Australia is fortunate that the Premier and the Treasurer did not win three most significant economic arguments in the state's history, because it is this history that shows just how vital the Liberal Party was in achieving economic growth for this state. There are three significant economic debates that have shaped South Australia's recent economic development: Roxby Downs; the sale of ETSA; and the introduction of the GST. They were all Liberal reforms and not one of them was supported by members opposite.

It seems unbelievable in today's terms that the Labor Party would have kicked out one of its MPs for voting to support Roxby even commencing. Mr Rann has opposed Roxby for something like 25 years, but now he is the Premier the mine has suddenly become important. This is very different from what Labor members had to say 20 or 25 years ago, when they called Roxby the mirage in the desert. It was not a mirage: it was the Liberal Party investing in the economic future of the state. The Labor Party did all it could to stop it. Where would we be now without Roxby Downs?

The sale of ETSA to rid South Australia of much of the State Bank debt is now part of the state's economic history. The interest payment savings are significant. Just look at figure 2.1 in Budget Paper 3. It shows annual interest

payments reduced from more than \$600 million to something like \$150 million. In September 2003, Standard and Poor's (one of the Treasurer's favourite rating agencies), released a report stating there were two key factors which allowed South Australia to recover its AAA credit rating lost by the State Bank. One of them, of course, was the sale of ETSA. What did the Treasurer have to say about reducing \$5 billion worth of debt? He and the Premier, and most of the members opposite, opposed it. I accept some were not here, but those who were here all opposed it. Where would we be without the debt reduction from the sale of ETSA?

The other key contributor to the economic conditions we enjoy today is the income from the GST. The GST is worth around \$3.5 billion annually. We might begin to see a pattern here. Did members opposite support the introduction of the GST? No, they actively campaigned against it. The Premier and Mr Beazley travelled around promoting the roll-back and then—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Do you remember the roll-back? They were going to roll it back. Then they called in other Labor leaders to join them. They gave up on the roll-back and they called it a rollover.

The GST is here to stay. The Premier even went so far as to describe the GST deal as a lemon for South Australia. So, there we have it, the three most significant economic reforms in the state's recent history, initiatives that gave the state an economic future, and members opposite opposed all three. These were initiatives that created thousands of jobs, generated thousands of dollars in mining royalties, and freed up business to produce thousands of dollars worth of exports. These were initiatives that saved the state from a crippling debt and delivered billions to the budget this year. They were all Liberal initiatives rejected by the Premier, Treasurer and the members opposite.

Looking to the future, what does the government offer other than expanding a mine that it once opposed? If its national counterparts allow, it might even allow more uranium mining. It is a nonsense that the Premier has to be told what is good for his own state by the wise men from the east. We welcome the federal government's decision to award South Australia the air warfare destroyer contract. It will be a great project for the state. But I ask the government: what about our local industries? South Australia has consistently been losing jobs: recently 200 jobs from AGL and 500 from Electrolux; previously the third shift at Holden's, and the list goes on.

What is the government's response to that in this budget? Grants and subsidies from a government that the Premier has touted as being unashamedly pro-mining have been cut by around \$5 million. Funding for the Office of Minerals and Energy Resources has been frozen, despite the predicted growth in the mining sector. Funding for the agriculture, forestry and fishing portfolio—all key economic portfolios—now makes up a paltry 1.8 per cent of the budget. In fact, funding has been close to halved since 2001-02. During the past four years, the economic development portfolio has been absolutely gutted. The overseas trade office has closed and there are more cuts in this budget. It seems to me the government's strategic plan is simply to wait for the ship to come in, and in this case, an air warfare destroyer.

Primary industries has always been an important sector for South Australia. This year the sector faces severe drought. Labor's fifth budget has deserted rural South Australia, and cuts have been made to vital services for agriculture at a time

when these services will be most needed. Government funding for agriculture, wine and the State Food Plan has again been reduced, totalling a 15 per cent cut over the past two years and a 20 per cent cut in real terms. These cuts come on top of the slash budgets in the first two years of the Rann government. The former Liberal government embarked on the State Food Plan and set very ambitious targets. We invested in the plan with South Australian food producers and saw huge growth in the food industry. By 2002 we exceeded the ambitious target of revenue by something like \$1 billion. The plan is now in disarray and the food industry continues to decline.

South Australia is nearly \$2 billion behind the target, and ABS figures reveal other key primary sectors are in decline. The gross value of agricultural production has fallen from \$4.6 billion to \$3.9 billion, a drop of some 14 per cent. The gross value of crops has fallen from \$3.2 billion to \$2.6 billion, a drop of 20 per cent, and the gross value of livestock products has fallen from \$546 million to \$501 million, a drop of some 8 per cent. The government cannot keep ignoring our primary industries and our regions.

Another important economic activity for South Australia is the tourism sector. Tourism has always been an important economic industry in South Australia and, after receiving major funding status and focus under the former Liberal government, tourism has now been downgraded. The tourism marketing budget has been cut from \$33 million to \$28 million, but at the same time the government has allocated \$2 million to be spent on an international guitar festival. Tourism is a key employer in the regions, and continued cutting of the tourism budget hurts regional South Australia.

Mining is also an important industry for South Australia. There is no provision in the budget for infrastructure required to make South Australia's mining potential a reality. Of the billions allocated to the capital works projects, not one project is targeting important rail, port or road projects for the mining sector. Despite the predicted growth in the mining sector, funding for the Office of Minerals and Energy Resources has been frozen.

If you consider all the above, there appears really to be no economic growth plan for South Australia, and I think this is the real missed opportunity within this budget. Small businesses have been ignored when they should have been embraced. The long-term danger for South Australia will be the continued failure of the government to do something for our 80 000 small businesses. It will be a missed opportunity from which many of them may never recover over the long term. Many small businesses would employ those who are losing jobs if they were only given the opportunity and the competitive cost structure to do so.

In the long term, it will be strong economic growth that will provide revenue to fund the services that our community will need, but this budget is not about growth. The *Financial Review* editorial the day after the budget summed it up this way:

With growth languishing at the bottom of the national league table, Mr Foley neglected what could be a life line—small business. Until the state government creates conditions in which business can create jobs and lure people back, the outlook will be ordinary.

I think the *Financial Review* has summed it up very well.

I have spent some time talking about economic growth because I think this is the key missed opportunity within the budget. I also wish to comment on how the budget snubs regional South Australia. I will not go through every program

in detail and the lack of investment in regional South Australia because I am sure local members on my side of the chamber will do so during their contributions. But I will say this: regional South Australia has every cause to be upset by the government's regional statement (Budget Paper 6, as it is known). It allocates something like \$2.8 million over four years for additional support for securing major events. In comparison, \$2 million has been provided for the International Guitar Festival in Adelaide, and \$1.4 million for the Thinkers in Residence program. The Regional Development Infrastructure Fund has just \$9.6 million for the whole state and is another illustration of the city-centric nature of the government. Port Lincoln Airport has lost money for its upgrade, and I am sure the member for Flinders may make some comment about this. The budget does nothing for regional South Australia. It basically ignores it. This is typical of Labor governments. Regional South Australia is a very important contributor to the South Australian economy and should be supported. It will need more support than ever in this a drought year.

I turn to the subject of roads. There have been so many missed opportunities to invest wisely in our state's economic future and so much money has been wasted on blow-outs, particularly in the transport portfolio. We have plenty of cost blow-outs and projects rolled over from budget to budget and from year to year. The cost to the government will be around \$100 million extra for opening bridges and, of course, there are the tens of millions being spent on the tram. What they have not done is spend money on regional roads or, indeed, a lot of existing metropolitan roads. Go for a drive along some of the metropolitan roads such as Unley Road, Greenhill Road and the freeway just east of Mount Barker. These roads are breaking up. I know my regional members have many examples of regional roads that are also desperately in need of maintenance.

This government has not spent money on addressing the road maintenance backlog. Under Labor, the backlog in state road maintenance has reached something like \$200 million, and there is also another \$200 million in federal and local government backlog maintenance. The RAA, the South Australian Road Transport Authority, Engineers Australia and the South Australian Freight Council have all called for a bigger increase in spending on roads and road maintenance. But Labor, of course, claims road maintenance has little impact on safety or the road toll, and we all remember that famous quote by the Minister for Transport when he said:

There are far too many road deaths and injuries on our roads but, if you are going to do something about that, you actually have to go where the causes are, and roads are not a major contributor. They are not a major contributor at all.

There is something like only \$3.4 million extra that has been committed to road maintenance for the whole of the state in the coming year. This is a sad joke—an extra \$3.5 million across the state with a \$200 million backlog. With the South Road project, the full cost of the blow-outs remain a tightly held secret, and the true extent of the blow-outs is yet to be revealed. Britannia roundabout, of course, has simply fallen off the agenda.

Ms Chapman: Again!

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: It has fallen off the agenda again. In May 2004 the Labor government announced that lights would be installed at the site at a cost of around \$8.5 million, nearly \$9 million, but nothing appears in the budget or, indeed, the forward estimates for this project. Outside the city, the story on roads is even worse. Ongoing work on the

state's regional roads has been limited to an increase of \$7.6 million for the shoulder sealing program and about the same amount of money for improvements to selected outback roads which, in part, will be welcomed by the member for Stuart. However, I think he made an excellent point during question time that a significant amount of that money will come from the federal government, something the minister was unable to confirm at the time.

An honourable member: Good old John Howard!

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Good old John Howard. The road funding really is a snub to regional South Australia, and members can understand why our country cousins get so upset when they see money wasted on a range of projects and little or nothing being spent on country roads. This is typical of Labor.

I will reiterate what I said earlier about economic growth providing the government with the revenue to fund services. Education is one such service. The Education Works strategy is one of the government's major budget planks. It closes 17 schools and kindergartens and there are rumours, of course, there could be more. So much for the education Premier. The opposition supports PPPs in principle if they represent value for money, and that is the big question on these proposals in the budget about PPPs. If they cannot deliver a South Road project on time and on budget and, if they cannot keep the Public Service under control and it blows out by \$8 500, what confidence does the South Australian public have that they will actually be able to get value for money for the PPPs?

That is the big question, and that will be the big test for this government. Based on Labor's recent track record of delivering major projects, one would have to be concerned about the government's ability to deliver the project on time, within budget and value for money. There is some community concern that this policy is all about asset sales designed to bring revenue into the budget now while spreading the recurrent cost across future budgets. Here is a government rolling in money, slashing the Public Service, increasing debt and selling assets in what the government calls the 'good times'.

Why is it doing this? Because of its own mismanagement. The Treasurer and the minister have assured South Australia there will be no cuts to teachers, but with only six schools to replace 17 which will be closed the public finds it hard to believe that teachers, support staff and other school workers will not be lost from state schools. The hypocrisy of the Premier now running around promoting the virtues of PPPs is not lost on the opposition. For eight years in opposition the Premier ran an anti-PPP and anti-privatisation line. He now sees them as the saviour of his budget.

Mr Williams: A bit like uranium.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Well, you know, 'I'm against uranium and now I'm for it. I'm against PPPs and now I'm for them.' The Premier is dripping with hypocrisy on this particular point. It is not lost on the opposition that, according to his own rhetoric, Mr Rann is the Premier now privatising our schools and prisons. There has been a steady drift of students from the state system to the private system. The question the self-proclaimed education Premier needs to start asking is: why is this happening?

We think the answer is reasonably obvious. The government has, to a very large extent, conceded control of the education policy to the Australian Education Union. All real attempts of reform have been thwarted by the Australian Education Union. Taxpayers will end up footing the bill

because the Labor government caved into union pressure and abandoned plans to introduce a new formula for staffing for state schools. The government originally claimed that the new formula was a component of the enterprise bargaining agreement that saw teachers awarded a 14 per cent pay rise. The formula was abandoned but the pay rise remains on the books.

Minister Lomax-Smith promoted the teacher funding formula as a fairer and more commonsense approach to allocating teachers to the state's 604 schools and claimed that the proposal was supported by the South Australian Secondary School Principals. Despite this support, the government caved into union pressure and abandoned the plan, leaving taxpayers exposed to the costs of another union-forced backflip. This is not the only example of Labor's caving into the education union.

Despite the minister's instructions, the Australian Education Union has advised teachers to refuse requests from parents who want to know how their children's marks compare with others in the class. With the AEU in control, there is little wonder that parents are deserting the public education system. There is one further policy question to be considered in response to this super schools concept, namely: do bigger schools deliver better education outcomes or are properly resourced smaller schools better?

What research has been taken to address that question? As a product of a public school of just 69 students, this is an area of great interest to me. What guarantee does the government have that bigger schools will deliver better educational outcomes and, indeed, better social outcomes? There is an argument to say that smaller schools—where teachers and students are closer together—develop a better quality education outcome. The simple question the government needs to answer in promoting the super schools concept is: do bigger schools deliver better educational outcomes? It is an interesting question to pose.

The education budget contains some nasty surprises for schools. The \$170 million worth of cuts will cause a lot of pain. The government proposal to take interest earned on school accounts is a disgrace. This will take \$6 million per year out of our schools. This means that hardworking school communities will be losing interest from their accounts, making vital projects, such as playgrounds and gymnasiums, even harder to fund. Also, of course, they will have to undertake additional fundraising to make up for the \$6 million lost. This is an action of a mean government.

I can name projects. One project funded when I was a minister in 2000 has not yet started. That school has had money—\$1 million or \$2 million—in that account for that time. It has budgeted the interest into part of that project to fund the equipment; and, if it loses that money, the project will be put back. It is all part of the budget. That is the point I think the government misses. It was not the school's fault that the project was delayed. Something called crown law and the Education Department held it up. The problem the government has with the policy is that it is not necessarily the parents or the school that delay projects: quite often it is the government's bureaucracy.

Health is also a key area of spending in the Treasurer's fifth budget. Of course, it is a key element of all budgets. The government has tried to give the impression that there is extra money in the budget and that it will all be spent on extra doctors and nurses. However, much of this additional \$640 million will have to be spent on the nurses' enterprise bargaining agreement. Any reviews of health agency

outcomes reveal a litany of under-performance, missed targets and a lack of ability to meet national benchmarks. Taxpayers need to ask what they are getting for their health spend?

Under Labor there has been little, if any, improvement in the delivery of health services in South Australia. On the eve of the budget's release, the Minister for Health snuck out the June 2006 'State of Our Hospitals' report, and we are still at the bottom of the pack when it comes to the length of time patients wait in almost all categories of elective surgery. The average wait Australia-wide is some 35 days; South Australia is now at 42 days. In fact, if one compares waiting times now to those in 2002 when the Rann government came to office, one will see that the average wait for surgery is now 30 per cent longer for urgent surgery, 44 per cent longer for semi-urgent surgery and 43 per cent for non-urgent surgery.

What value are we getting for the health dollar? Nearly every current capital works project in the health portfolio is running behind schedule and/or over budget. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital's stages 2 and 3 have blown out by something like \$250 million, and the budget now reveals a completion date of July 2011. The cost of the Margaret Tobin Mental Health Unit at Flinders has blown out from approximately \$14 million to \$17.2 million. The \$7 million Boylan Ward/Helen Mayo mental health facility listed in the 2005-06 budget did not rate a mention. The \$6.5 million Noarlunga Hospital Mental Health Unit was listed in the 2005-06 budget, but it seems that this has been dropped. The \$4.3 million Lyell McEwin Hospital service redevelopment has blown out by \$11 million and delayed until 2009. The \$3.5 million Adelaide Aboriginal Step Down Service has been delayed until 2008.

This is all about the government's mismanagement. The renal beds in Port Augusta are the only rural health expenditure, but I understand that that may be a re-announcement. In a move driven by ideology, Modbury Hospital will transfer back to public sector management. The Treasurer has called this a milestone for health in the northern-eastern suburbs. It will cost \$17.5 million of taxpayers' money over the next three years. How this investment will improve service delivery in the northern suburbs is a question that, thus far, the government has been unable to answer. Modbury will still be the same hospital: it will now just cost taxpayers \$17.5 million more. It will be interesting to see if the government will include existing hospital staff as being new and extra to the Public Service when they transfer in.

The budget has largely ignored the crisis in mental health. This budget has stalled the mental health reform agenda. South Australia has very low levels of funding for non-government mental health services at only 2 per cent of mental health funding. The non-government sector has been lobbying for a continued commitment to the mental health reform agenda that sees a shift away from hospital-based services. They were hopeful that the government's \$25 million one-off payment would become recurrent, but no such commitment has been made. There are now concerns that service providers will be unable to make long-term provisions and that they will have to manage their case load of clients and staff of mental health workers very carefully because they are unable to guarantee services or employment.

Funding for disability services has also decreased from \$171 million to \$159 million, a reduction of about 7 per cent. Here, indeed, was another missed opportunity. In terms of the environment budget, it offers few new programs. It appears that the agenda over the next four years is to complete what

they did not finish over the past four years. The 19 marine parks are a classic example. They should have been in place by now. As of today not one has been declared. It is also disappointing that the completion of the Second Generation of Parklands has been pushed out to 2036, instead of being completed by 2022—

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Yes, 2036, instead of being completed by 2022, as originally planned. Underpinning the budget are savings of \$695 million. Much of the pain of these savings is in the out years and it will be felt in the future as the government tries to grapple with what it has announced this week. In many areas the details are so scarce that it is impossible to know what is proposed to be cut. I am not even sure the government knows itself what it intends to cut. It is the unsuspecting public who will feel the pain of the budget during the next four years. After five years of the Rann government, what do we have? We have higher taxes, bigger spending, infrastructure blow-outs, increased debt, asset sales, low growth, jobs slashed, a snub to small business and the abandonment of regional South Australia. It is the same old Labor.

Honourable members: Hear, Hear!

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): In speaking to the Appropriation Bill, I will first talk to several technical matters associated with this budget. As members may be aware, there are two distinct approaches to budget preparation in both the public and private sectors. The first is zero-based budgeting which proceeds from an assumption that, in framing a budget, there is zero activity and consequently zero dollar commitment—a blank sheet, if you like. It is based on the premise that management should be required to justify existing activities in exactly the same way as new proposals. Zero budgeting injects a high degree of rigour into the budgetary process, as well as an extremely high degree of flexibility which can sometimes be necessary if government or business seeks to dramatically realign their spending priorities.

It is also a radical procedure that can produce short to medium-term organisational instability by introducing widespread uncertainty during budget preparation and dislocation during the implementation phase. It is a process that requires high level management skills. The second approach is called incremental budgeting and proceeds from the assumption that policy directions are fixed. The budget process updates the previous budget by applying expected price, volume, inflation and operational changes. The main justification for the coming year's expenditure is the previous year's expenditure. With incremental budgeting, it is assumed that an activity shall continue its right to claim on resource allocation simply because it is already there. Incremental budgeting is an extremely conservative process. Although it is conducive to organisational stability, and in the case of government gives surety of continuity of specific service delivery to the community, it risks denying government the fiscal freedom to develop programs for the future.

A succinct criticism of incremental budgeting is contained in directives to the US government contained in the President's Management Agenda for the fiscal year 2002. Prepared by the Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, it directs that budget preparation 'focus on the base not the increment'. It states:

Policy and budget debates focus on the marginal increase or cut in a program—failing to look at whether the program as a whole, the base, is working or achieving anything worthwhile. We need to

reverse the presumption that this year's funding level is the starting point for considering next year's funding level.

This budget has broken the chains of incremental budgeting and in this the Treasurer and Treasury are to be warmly congratulated. One only needs to look at education to see a high degree of zero-based budgeting at work. Six new schools, high-tech trade schools of the future, a new South Australian Certificate of Education and birth to year 12 educational facilities are totally new and innovative solutions to what, in many areas of South Australia, including my electorate of Napier, are challenging educational issues.

The second technical matter I would like to address is that of performance based budgeting. I return to the president's management agenda on this matter, not only because it makes eminent sense but because the US employs the same accounting software as South Australia—the Hyperion performance-based budgeting for government system. Hyperion claims that their system allows agencies to focus on budget analysis and linking budget to program successes as prescribed by the president's management agenda. The management agenda sets what it terms a focus on results, stating that, and I quote, 'a mere desire to address a problem is not sufficient justification for spending the public's money. Performance-based budgeting would mean that money would be allocated not just on the basis of perceived need but also on the basis of what is actually being accomplished'.

The performance commentary contained in the portfolio statements of the budget shows a significant strengthening in terms of greater detail and a greater use of numeric performance indicators showing actual against target outcomes. Performance against South Australian Strategic Plan targets is also reflected in a number of portfolio areas, probably indicating a move to link the targets and highlights of all portfolio areas to Strategic Plan targets in future budget documents.

The most significant performance based initiative in this budget and the one that will probably extract the greatest benefit from the Hyperion performance-based budgeting system is the savings regime flowing out of the Greg Smith Review. Expenditure savings measures in the budget total \$277 million in 2009-10 and flow from the consolidation of business support functions, abolition of the Department for Administrative and Information Services and the Office of Public Employment, as well as specific agency measures in Education and Children's Services; Health, Families and Communities; Justice; and Transport, Energy and Infrastructure. These potential savings are reflected in the Commonwealth Grants Commission benchmarking of service delivery costs across all of the states. This is an observation I also made in my response to the 04-05 budget, based on Commonwealth Grants Commission figures for the previous financial year.

According to material contained in Budget Paper 3 of this year's budget, the Grants Commission estimates that South Australia spent \$710.1 million more in 2004-05 providing services than should have been necessary if the services were delivered at a national average level. This was 8.2 per cent above the level of state government expenditure that Grants Commission calculations thought was necessary.

It could be the case that in a number of areas South Australia's spending is higher because we are delivering services to a standard above the national level. That is this state's decision to make, and it could reflect priorities in South Australia that are not shared by our counterparts

interstate. This would certainly be the case in the broad category of culture and recreation where South Australia has carved out a niche as the national's cultural leader through events such as the Festival of Arts and the Fringe. In this area our spending is 20.6 per cent above that deemed sufficient to deliver a national average of benefits or services by the Grants Commission.

However, it could also be that in certain big ticket areas we are not achieving the levels of efficiency of some of the other states. This may be the case in general public services where in 04-05 we spent an additional \$342.8 million, or 21.3 per cent more than the national average as determined by the Grants Commission. It is in this area that the Greg Smith's review identified significant savings.

Education and health, on the face of the raw Grants Commission data, also appear to be areas where significant savings could be achieved. In the area of education, the Grants Commission has previously identified that South Australia has the poorest result in terms of per capita asset utilisation. This figure is determined by adding up the value of all educational assets in South Australia such as land and school buildings and dividing this total figure by the number of students. Put simply, South Australia has too many schools, in comparison with the other states, for the number of students. The decision to build six new schools and close down up to 17 existing schools and to use public private partnerships commences the process of driving better capital utilisation in South Australia. Whether future savings can be made in this portfolio area is highly problematic given the extent of severe educational disadvantage in certain area of this state. I will return to this matter.

In driving efficiency gains, performance based budgeting must be placed to the fore, not only to free up resources to assist in meeting South Australia's Strategic Plan targets but also to meet one of the targets of the plan itself which is, 'to lead the nation in cost effectiveness of government services within five years'. An invaluable tool in meeting this objective could be to follow the lead of the New South Wales government and extend the role of the Auditor-General to also encompass the efficiency with which departments and agencies deliver their core services. The Office of the Auditor-General in New South Wales has two distinct functions which are, in turn, reflected in the structure of the office—one is financial auditing and the other is performance auditing. The formal presentation of these reports to the Economic and Finance Committee, as is the case with the New South Wales parliament's Public Accounts Committee, would assist in meeting the cost effectiveness objectives of the South Australian Strategic Plan. I was a guest of the New South Wales Parliament's Public Accounts Committee for a presentation by the Auditor-General of a performance audit report and believe it would be an invaluable adjunct to the performance measuring of the Hyperion system.

The final technical matter I will address relates to the underlying reporting principles on which this budget is based. As members may be aware, governments have moved from a cash-flow accounting basis to the accrual method which is used internationally by the private sector. Put simply, governments no longer put a budget deficit or surplus figure to its budget outcome on the basis of how much money it expects to have in the bank, or not to have in the bank at the end of the year. Instead, like the private sector, it now takes into account prepaid items—assets—and unpaid commitments—liabilities—in determining its projected and actual end of year result.

However, in moving to accrual accounting, a move that I warmly welcomed, government has adopted the uniform presentation framework which is based on the reporting standards of the Australian Bureau of Statistics through its government financial statistics framework. There may have been very good reasons several years ago to have adopted this framework, but in certain important areas these reasons are very difficult to discern. For budget documents that are supposed to be accessible to the general public and readily understood in depth by the financially literate members of our community, we have budgets framed at the national and state levels containing one central measure which actually defies accounting common sense. This is the net lending outcome.

Using the uniform presentation framework, the financial health of a state is presented in terms of the net operating balance and the net lending outcome. The net operating balance is fairly clear cut and approximates to the profit and loss statement used in the private sector. However, the net lending outcome figure appears to have no like counterpart in private sector accounting—I have been unable to find it—and I believe gives an inaccurate picture of the financial health of the state. The net lending statement takes the bottom line of the operating statement and deducts the value in investment expenditures as well as add back in depreciation. It is a confusing measure as it is a hybrid concoction of accrual and cash flow.

I note that the commonwealth government's Financial Reporting Council, whose function it is to advise the government through the Australian Accounting Standards Board on the process of setting accounting standards, has taken on the task of harmonising generally accepted accounting principles (GAPP) and government financial statistics. This means that government budgets will follow the accounting principles that apply in the private sector internationally. I have a hope and an expectation that net lending outcomes will disappear from budget statements probably from 2008 onwards.

On non-technical matters, I observed that a number of members of the commentariat have described the budget as not being a Labor budget. My major focus since being elected has been to improve the educational outcomes in my electorate of Napier. To this end, I spent three weeks in July visiting specialist technology, engineering, and business and enterprise high schools across the UK to investigate possible education models that could be applied here in South Australia. One highlight was visiting a new, state-of-the-art educational facility being built as a PPP at Hadley near Telford that involves the closing of three existing schools. From having some of the worst educational facilities in the UK, this disadvantaged area will end up with probably one of the best. It will open up a whole host of opportunities for that community that did not previously exist. Offering young people in depressed areas a leg-up in life through education is the most Labor thing a government can do, and this budget does just that.

At the centre of this budget is the proposal to build six new schools. I am extremely gratified that two of these schools will be built in the Smithfield Plains/Playford North area. These schools will have a transformational effect on the lives of many children in my electorate and on their broader community. The need for these schools is highlighted by the current educational context of the area. In my first speech to the parliament on 8 May 2002, I referred to a series of studies which highlighted what were totally unacceptable educational outcomes in my electorate. One of these studies noted that the

national university participation rate was 24.2 per cent, and for Elizabeth it was a mere 7.6 per cent. Of 290 regions used in this analysis, Elizabeth was ranked 288, third from the bottom. When university and TAFE participation rates were combined and plotted on the same scale of 290 regions Australia-wide, Elizabeth was ranked at 287. Elizabeth stood as the metropolitan region with the lowest combined TAFE and university participation rate in Australia. Pre-tertiary education was clearly failing the young people of the Elizabeth area.

The findings for Elizabeth and the electorate of Napier of these studies are reiterated by data contained in the Ministerial Review of Senior Education in South Australia, the SACE review. On page 34 of the review, apparent retention rates for years 10 to 12 are graphed against socioeconomic status of local government areas of school location. The City of Playford, in which the electorate of Napier firmly sits, is positioned well away from all other local government areas at the extreme bottom left of the graph, indicating extremely poor retention rates and high socioeconomic disadvantage, the worst in metropolitan Adelaide on both scores. In the context of these results, it is not an option to keep limping along the same path and producing the same results. Decisive and bold action is required.

The educational proposals in this budget are the most significant reform agenda for our school infrastructure in more than 30 years, and represent the bold action that is needed. The schools in my electorate are staffed by professional and dedicated educators. Unfortunately they are hampered by the physical facilities in which they are working. Some of the schools earmarked for relocation in my electorate were built in the 1960s and were designed to cater for as many as four or five times the number of students they currently have. Consequently, large sections of the schools are simply not being used. Unused buildings inevitably appear derelict and set an entirely wrong tone for the students and for the communities.

It is a well-noted fact that a community's sense of self-worth often starts with the state of its schools. Such large and ageing facilities also absorb far too much of the schools' budgets. The relocation of these schools into new premises offers exciting and brilliant opportunities for the students and the communities and is reflected by the overwhelmingly positive reaction to these proposals. School facilities need to reflect current learning priorities, particularly in areas such as IT, science and technology. A leading edge facility will engender leading edge learning. These new schools, I believe, will assist this objective.

Educational attainment is a strong predictor of later life outcomes in terms of employability, welfare dependency, general health and life expectancy. For people with lower levels of educational attainment, adverse social outcomes not only impact on the quality of their lives but also have a broader community implication in terms of the economic costs of extended periods of welfare dependency, high rates of health care use and gross underutilisation of human capital in terms of exacerbating the skill shortage. By investing so heavily in education, particularly in areas of social disadvantage, this budget attempts to neutralise the regrettable inequality of opportunity that children suffer simply as a result of where and to whom they were born. It is against this background that the budget can emphatically be described as probably the best Labor budget to have been delivered in living memory.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): The closing remark of the speaker before me was that this was the best Labor budget in living memory! Ask the disabled! Ask the mentally ill! Ask families in need! Ask pensioners if this is the best Labor budget in living memory! Ask those who do not have the physical, emotional or financial strength to survive! They might tell you a different story. In fact this budget is an interesting chapter in the Labor Party's history. It is a chapter that demonstrates a party moving from being a party for the little people, a party for the battlers and the working man, a party whose roots are so firmly planted in the working classes and their needs to a party of a totally different character: a party of Armani suits; a party where members represent poor downtrodden electorates, but live with the hoi polloi in rich, plush electorates; a party where ministers hobnob it with the big end of town and are proud to do it; a party that is quietly distancing itself from the union movement and doing its best to bring the union movement to heel, on some occasions unsuccessfully; a party trying to transform itself into a totally different animal—an animal that confuses a lot of people. I would not be that proud of this budget if I were moving around some of the less well off working class areas of Adelaide. I would be a little bit embarrassed about it.

The other thing about this budget is that it is demonstrating the same pattern we saw in this government's first term in office. We had the usual fibs and prefabrications about having inherited a mess back in 2002. Forgotten was the fact that as a Liberal government we had got rid of almost \$12 billion worth of debt that we inherited when Premier Rann was last a senior minister in government. It was Mike Rann's \$11 billion debt and Kevin Foley's \$11 billion debt—he was the senior adviser to the premier at the time of the change of government. Those two had their hands all over the State Bank fiasco. That was all gone by the time they took over in 2002 and the \$300 million per year we were in the red back then had also been dealt with. I can tell members who inherited a mess: Dean Brown and Stephen Baker inherited a mess—an absolute catastrophe delivered when this Labor Party was last in office. I will tell you what we did about it. We fixed the mess! We handed over a show that was in terrific shape.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: In the first budget in 2002 Treasurer Foley administered quite a lot of cuts. His second and third budgets also contained a lot of cuts. The fourth budget, prior to the most recent election, was a handout, a giveaway. This budget indicates that we are about to see the same pattern. A cynical person could be forgiven for believing that this budget slashes the Public Service. If I read a transcript from ABC Radio on 16 March I thought that would never happen. Matthew Abraham of the ABC said, 'And you won't fund those by getting rid of other jobs?' He was referring to promises the Labor government and Treasurer Foley had made. The answer from Treasurer Foley was, 'No, no: we won't be funding our promises by getting rid of Public Service jobs.' That has turned out to be untrue, just like the promise to the Hotels Association that there would be no increase in poker taxes was also frankly untrue—and it was in writing! Regardless of one's view about poker machine taxes, it was a promise from a would-be government to the business community in writing that certain things would not be done, and then those promises were instantly broken.

People could be forgiven for being cynical about whether or not this government can meet its commitments and promises and is a government of its word. It is not a budget, therefore, in my view for a government to be proud of. It is tax and spend. There are over 30 per cent increases in revenue. As to the much-touted \$2 700 million more coming in each year, the Treasurer is swallowing money that fast that he is choking. As he is swallowing the money he is letting out his belt: he has been letting out his belt for five or four years. Swallow the money, let out your belt and get fat. What we have is big, fat, lazy government. During the election campaign, the Liberal Party said, 'You've hired 8 000 more public servants than you said you would.' The Treasurer sat down and said, 'Oh, by God, by golly, by gosh! It's true.' Now he is sitting there saying, 'Gee, I'd better do something about that. I'd better tighten my belt.' If he is not careful, he will suffocate and choke himself to death tightening his belt. If he had not swallowed that cash for 4½ years and let out his belt, we would not be in this predicament. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, just imagine what could have been achieved if there had been a bit more discipline from the outset.

I will turn my attention to those matters within my shadow portfolio areas of responsibility: energy, transport and infrastructure. I will start with energy because I heard my friend the member for Mawson barking a moment ago about the sale of ETSA. He is perfectly right. Being a very astute politician, he noticed that we sold ETSA. That is true, but let me ask the member for Mawson this: has he argued in caucus for the Labor government to stand by its principles and rush off, take the money out of the bank and buy the assets back?

Mr Bignell: You can't unscramble the egg.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: He says you cannot unscramble the egg. How foolish the member is. Various slices of our power industry have been for sale on three occasions in the last three years. Anything is for sale and anything is for purchase. All you need to do is sit down and do the deal. So, I say to the member: who is arguing over there to stand up for that great Labor principle that ETSA should never have been sold, and who is rushing to buy it back with the billions of dollars they are putting in the bank? I cannot hear anyone. I cannot hear the member for Mawson. I cannot hear the member for West Torrens. I cannot hear anybody. Nobody is rushing now.

This point is not lost on people. It is not lost on the union movement, I can tell you that. It is not lost on all those who look to the Labor Party to be a party of principle. Members opposite love the fact that ETSA is privatised; you love it. The Treasurer, in particular, loves it because, as the leader pointed out, he does not have to pay all those interest payments. Guess what? The Minister for Infrastructure can get up and belt AGL and ETSA over power failures. Imagine for a moment (and members on this side should try to contain themselves) if the Minister for Infrastructure had control of our energy assets. We would be building power stations, and they would be blowing out from \$200 million to \$500 million. They would be over budget and over schedule. There would be power stations blowing up. This bloke cannot build a bridge, he cannot build a tunnel and he cannot build a Northern Expressway. He cannot get a trick right, but the Labor Party says, 'We wish he was running the power system.' There would be one almighty blackout if that were the case.

So, do not try to continue the lie—and it is a lie—that the Labor Party is opposed to the privatisation of ETSA. You

loved it. In the early days, the Treasurer was going around the corridors saying, 'I hope you guys get this through,' but, when confronted by Olsen, he denied it. We have talked about some of the fibs that have been told. The right of the Labor Party loves the idea because it helped deliver the buoyant financial circumstances the Labor Party has inherited. Thank God we sold ETSA. You loved it. You have done nothing to reverse it. You are disingenuous on the subject. You are delighted that it is sold, so do not try to con people to the contrary. You were never taken to account on that issue, but you will be in this parliament. We are happy to have the debate. Let us get on talkback radio and start people thinking about why the Labor Party has not stood by its sworn principles and unscrambled the egg with all the money it has. Let us get the talkback going. I cannot wait.

I turn now to roads, because this issue is a tragedy in the budget. With all the money he has had coming in, the Treasurer has struggled to find any money of real significance for roads. It has been pointed out that he will not tell us or confess, if you like, how much the South Road tunnels will cost. It has also been pointed out that it is all right to talk about \$550 million for the Northern Expressway. What a mess that has been. It has blown out by \$250 million. The government is going off with its cap in hand to the federal government hoping to make its stupidity the federal government's crisis. Do not be surprised if the Prime Minister and the federal government come back and say, 'Look, I am sorry, but other states have put up a better, more cogent argument.' Do not be surprised if they just cannot dust \$250 million extra out of their pocket and throw it at the Northern Expressway. It is all right to talk about the cost of that project.

Mr Bignell interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mawson will have an opportunity to respond to what the member for Waite is saying in his speech. I suggest he holds his fire until he has that opportunity. I also encourage the member for Waite to stick to the budget and not respond to interjections.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Of course, I remind newcomers to the parliament that my presentation is nothing like that of the member for Port Adelaide when he stood in this very place in opposition.

We are not being told in the budget what the full cost of the South Road tunnels will be. As members know, I have been very active in helping those communities—ranging from small businesses to home owners and people whose properties will be compulsorily acquired—through the problems that will be delivered upon them down on South Road. We know why you do not want to admit to the cost. We know why the whole project has not yet been officially approved by cabinet and therefore sent to the Public Works Committee—because you have mucked it up from start to finish. Now you seek to conceal your mistakes by not revealing the information in the budget. It is very disappointing. The reason you have encountered these problems with the Northern Expressway, the South Road tunnels and the Bakewell Bridge, is that there is no 20-year vision for infrastructure. There should be. If there was, this budget would be in context.

Let me move on to the \$200 million backlog in road maintenance. Only \$3.4 million was provided in this budget for new work on road maintenance. There are some other programs that have rolled over but they are not, strictly speaking, road maintenance. They are for new building work. At the rate that road maintenance is being funded in this

budget, it could be 60 years before we catch up—if we ever do. It is costing lives, it is causing injuries, and it is hurting businesses and regional communities. There is no effort to address it. The so-called \$50 million on new buses is nothing more than a continuation of an existing replacement program.

Before I move on to public transport, let me point out that the budget has completely deserted the people of the South-East. Just a few weeks ago, 'A Plan for Freight Transport for the South-East/Limestone Coast Region of South Australia' was released, dated July 2006. It has the government of South Australia's logo on it. It calls for \$85 million to be invested over a number of years in bypasses at Penola, Mount Gambier and Millicent; widening of the pavement and strengthening of the Clay Wells to Penola Road; reintroduction of the South-East rail network; overtaking lanes on the Riddoch and Princes highways; and road widening on the Princes Highway between Mount Gambier and Millicent, just to begin. There was no mention of it in the budget. There was no funding provision, particularly for the Penola bypass which is well advanced and, as the government knows, is out for public consultation. It is a \$24 million or \$25 million project, looking for \$9 million from the state government. The budget is silent.

Councils have been led down the garden path to believe there would be some money for them, and it is simply not there. If it is not in the budget then there is no money for them. Councils should not be fooled into thinking there is. So, it is at least another year and we will see what transpires. This is just another example of the budget failing regional South Australia.

I will not spend much time on the massive cuts that the government intends to make to the department—millions of dollars over a period of time. However, I will move to public transport, because the house needs to remember that the budget has now formalised revenue streams from the 10 per cent hike in bus, train and tram tickets gazetted in June but which are, in effect, budget measures in this budget, pre-announced so as to deflect attention from them on budget day.

Members will be familiar with the exact increases in multitrip, singletrip and daytrip fares and claims that the government's fuel bill was up by \$6.5 million. The government's announcement in the budget of expenditure of \$2.14 million on increased fuel expenses for buses, and \$4.48 million for fuel for trains, fits the June announcement, but it has only provided for increased fuel expenses for 2006-07 and nothing beyond. What is the government going to do? Keep the increased fares but not provide the extra increase in fuel prices? If fuel prices come down—and they are trending down now—are the fare prices going to be reduced or is that money just going to keep raking in? That is a real question for the government to answer. It is fine to criticise Qantas for not cutting its fares if fuel prices go down if the government has budgeted only to pay that money taken from people through tickets for year one. That is one to watch.

The additional services that the government is suggesting will occur, and the supposed \$10 million of new investment, is nothing more than the incremental increases to the contracts provided for in the metroticket contracts and other arrangements for the running of our bus, train and tram system. There is no real increase. The government knows full well it is about to reorganise bus schedules. It has asked Torrens Transit to move buses off the less well-used routes on to the busy commuter routes. That is how the smoke and

mirrors will give the impression that there are more loadings. Instead of having one trip from Noarlunga to the city, people might have to get off the bus at Marion, change buses, and it will show up as two trips and two loadings. It is all smoke and mirrors. It is quite apparent that that amount of money—\$10 million over four years—will not even match inflation. It is simply a joke. Overall expenditure on public transport is also reduced in this budget, apart from the very significant cuts, as I have mentioned, across the portfolio. It is a budget that seriously fails public transport. It seriously fails our regional roads and country precincts.

There is nothing in the budget about improving security in the taxi industry, an issue that has come up in recent months. There is a definite need to replace camera and GPS technology in our taxis. There have been a number of very serious attacks upon female passengers, in particular. There is nothing in the budget about addressing that problem. The government has been out there saying that it is going to make an investment. I cannot see anything in the budget, in the way of an investment, to help the taxi industry through those issues. There are—

Mr Koutsantonis: Why do you hate cab drivers so much?

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I will ignore the interjections by the member for West Torrens because they are puerile. But I will say this to the honourable member: the taxi industry needs your help. The taxi industry needs support and it does not have it in this budget.

From the point of view of energy, transport and infrastructure, this budget is a massive failure. It is not a budget for the Labor Party to be proud of. It is a budget that lacks vision and it fails to show and demonstrate a long-term plan to develop infrastructure, transport and energy. It is a budget that fails not only businesses and families in regional South Australia but, implicitly, all families in South Australia because it fails to invest in our future economic growth. This budget has been widely condemned by groups linked to the transport industry, such as SARTA and the freight council, and I ask members to reflect very carefully upon its contents.

Time expired.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): Gough Whitlam described Paul Keating as a 'prima donna assoluta', and I apologise to any Italians present for the accent. What we have in South Australia is certainly not the world's best treasurer, and I do not think Keating was ever that, but we do have a Treasurer who is a real prima donna. We also have a Premier who has broken promises and missed opportunities. We are seeing the broken promises in education, and we will see privatisation of school assets. We will have asset sales to partly fund those privatisations, and you cannot tell me we will have more teachers: we will see fewer teachers. You cannot close 17 schools, put on six and tell me that there will not be fewer teaching jobs.

I want to talk about the missed opportunities. The state receives \$2.7 billion each and every year from that river of gold called the GST. This lot and their federal colleagues oppose it. But let us look back a little bit. Greg Smith, who has come over here (and I am not attacking him because he has done an excellent job, and his job description has come in well), has recommended \$1.4 billion in cuts because he has seen how crazily this government has behaved and the disastrous position this state will be in unless there is a significant turnaround. Greg Smith was Mr Option C during the Keating-Hawke tax summit in 1985. He recommended capital gains tax, fringe benefits tax and tax imputation and,

had Labor not opposed it but had the guts to bring it in, they would have had a river of gold much earlier. Mr Greg Smith wanted a 12.5 per cent GST. So, not only did they not listen to Greg Smith then but also they have not listened to him now. They have implemented fewer than half the cuts Greg Smith has recommended, so there are more to come. Watch this space and be very afraid, taxpayers and small business owners of South Australia—be very, very afraid.

The recommendations that Greg Smith made were also revealed a little bit in the *Sunday Mail* by Michael McGuire, who was until 2006 Kevin Foley's press secretary, so I imagine he would have a little bit of inside knowledge. Michael McGuire said Greg Smith recommended 108 separate cuts in this budget. \$695 million has been shaved off spending over four years. He also wrote:

But, as Foley admitted this week, financial consultant Greg Smith offered recommendations that would have doubled those savings.

Michael McGuire in the article in the *Sunday Mail* also let the cat out of the bag. I said in this place that there would be 45 school closures. There are 17 on the upfront hit list and there are a lot more on the secret hit list. But, no, there is more. Michael McGuire writes in *The Sunday Mail* that the original thinking was that somewhere north of 50 schools would be closed and more new schools would be built. However, clearly, cabinet and Mike Rann got cold feet at the prospect of the media headlines. Once again, it is Media Mike at his very worst; it is management by the media.

We have a merry-go-round of education policy by the Labor government in this state. Let us go back to the 1990s and revisit the sad and bad old days of the busted bank and the Bannon decade. Let us look at the issues confronting the state then and remember what we are hearing now. We had an ageing population being talked about then; we had declining school enrolments being talked about then; we had a shift from the public to the private sector being talked about then; we had retention rates being talked about then; we had teacher retirements because of an ageing teacher population being talked about then; and we had class sizes and urging for smaller class sizes being talked about then. We even had 63 school closures under the Bannon government (with Mike Rann sitting at the table) and no consultation whatsoever. The other thing we had in 1989 was 180 teaching places that went missing because 180 teachers had gone. In 1990, 795 teachers went west with 106 SSOs. That is 1 081 teaching and SSO places gone. So, Andrew Gohl and the AEU should watch out.

Let us look at the SACE review. We are about to spend about \$68 million on SACE. Back in the early 1990s we had SACE mark I, and let us look at the issues facing the SACE then. They are similar issues to those we are facing now. We wanted to introduce flexible programs with more subject choice, and we wanted to retain more students. We wanted to have success for all. They did not call it 'success for all' then, but they do now. They wanted to attain close to 100 per cent accreditation for students. New SACE (and I will have a lot more to say about new SACE) is based on the Spadey outcomes-based education pedagogy, and it is an absolute disaster. What we will see is a disaster for this state. We will have what we have seen in England. We will have universities complaining about outcomes-based education providing vocational subjects where people start at university, cannot cope and drop out. It is a real worry for this state.

The state government does not have any answers. This is a real lost opportunity for education. You only have to go

through the budget papers to see what is going on. Premier Rann promised no privatisation, yet we will have private operators owning and maintaining schools. We are selling off assets—there are no asset sales but we are selling off 17 schools. That is what they are saying already, but we know there is a secret list of probably closer to 60 than 50. Where will they come from? Which schools will be closed? I tell Andrew Gohl to look at the Education Act and see how easy it is for the minister to close schools. We consulted to the nth degree on every one of those schools, and we will have much more to say about the untruths that have been peddled out there by both the minister and the Premier on that fact. The Labor government has a very short memory.

The big issue, though, is that they are going to close 17 schools and build six schools. It is not six super schools: there is one super school and there are variations on the theme after that. Some of that in some areas is really good, because we have Cafe Enfield working for birth up to year seven and that is working really well. We have issues in the member for Napier's electorate which will benefit from a more consolidated approach to community services, because it is not just the school that is an issue, it is the communities, and we need to ensure we are looking after the communities.

It has been much boasted that you can go to the Education Works strategy web site and look at the glossy pictures. There is \$216 million being put into that. However, when one reads it one can see that it hopes that \$134 million will come from PPPs (private investment). Some of the other \$82 million is coming from asset and school sales. It is \$56.2 million over four years. We do not know where any of these schools will be located and we do not know the actual structure of these schools. There are so many things we do not know. We have a bit of a plan for a plan, but that is all we have got. This financial year, \$3 million will be spent on implementation teams and project support. We are spending \$9.5 million on consultants.

Remember how members opposite bagged us for using consultants? Well, the government is spending \$9.5 million on consultants for the privatisation of schools and the associated asset sales. The question I ask about privatisation of schools in South Australia is: will they work? My information from people who have far more knowledge than I in this area—both in the education sector and in the commercial development sector—is that a specific issue exists in South Australia and that PPPs for schools will not work unless some significant inducements are made on behalf of the government.

The government will be paying back 10 per cent, 11 per cent and 12 per cent to developers. I do not agree with Andrew Gohl. Did members listen to the slur on South Australian companies by Andrew Gohl on the ABC on Friday 22 September, when he said:

What companies are about is making profit and when making profit there is a potential for shortcuts. There is a potential for substandard materials.

I do not think that companies work like that. They do not do that. Andrew Gohl should apologise to Hansen Yuncken, Baulderstones and other companies in South Australia that do a damn good job and serve South Australia well. We have a long history in South Australia of budget blow-outs in any infrastructure project that is touched by this government. I have a serious concern that, if anyone comes up with a proposal or a PPP, the government will not be able to manage it very well at all. As for the school closures, a quote from last Friday's *Advertiser* states:

A parent, Kelly Anderson, said, 'It's ridiculous and should be stopped immediately. We'll be fighting it all the way.'

It will not be as easy as the minister thinks, unless she intends to get in and tell people they will close. A quote from page 9 of the *Sunday Mail*, dated 24 September, states:

Parents at Mansfield Park said, 'We don't know where the new school will be but inevitably some parents will have to travel much further to drop their kids off.'

We had the minister saying that people are much more mobile now. I ask the member for Napier whether there are two-car families out his way? I do not think so. Are there buses on every corner? I do not think so. Come rain, hail or shine those kids will have to go to school. At least back in 1990 the Labor government had it half right, because it acknowledged that, even though they were not economically viable, it intended to keep primary schools in their local communities. It did acknowledge the fact that kids may have to travel a little further to refurbished high schools, and all power to it at that stage because that is an acceptable outcome.

There is no doubt that some schools need to be looked at to see whether they do have a real future in 2006 and 2011 South Australia. It is a real issue, but the way in which this government is handling it is not the way it should be done. It is not so much what the government is doing but how it is doing it. Whether it is to do with tramline extensions, PPPs or underpasses it is how the government is doing it. It just does not seem to be able to manage the real McCoy when it comes down to business and economics.

The public letters to *The Advertiser* and the *Sunday Mail* have been quite an interesting read, but I really do get cross when the government targets the former Liberal government and says, 'Well, you didn't do anything. There are issues going back to the early 1990s.' Well, let us not forget that we came to government with a huge \$10 billion debt after Labor broke the bank. No wonder we had to do some things that were not very palatable. No wonder we had to recover the state debt by selling off ETSA. If members are honest and look at Standard and Poor's they will see that the only reason we have a AAA rating is because the Liberal government had the guts to take the bull by the horns and make some very hard decisions.

When one looks at savings in the education budgets one always starts to think, 'Well, where are we going here?' Mike Rann promised no budget cuts but you can work it out when you dig out the detail. In my first budget speech in this place in 2002, I described the budget as prestidigitation—sleight of hand. This budget is even worse. It is so convoluted, so complex and so difficult for a non-economist like me, a non-accountant like me (I am only a poor veterinarian), to get in there to try to tease out who is doing what to whom. There are some glaring issues here, particularly the \$17 million that will be made in savings from the restructure of district and central offices.

How will these savings be produced, how many jobs will be lost and how many TVSPs will come back on the scene? We see in the budget line savings from TVSPs that have already been offered to disguise the job losses—\$13.5 million is being spent on TVSPs there. Education employees are worried about their future. Greg Smith did a good job and the ACT government followed his advice. I think that his advice was poorly directed. Obviously, he is an economic rationalist from way back. Forty schools were closed and 150 teachers were sacked in the ACT, so the AEU should be very careful here.

It is *deja vu*, South Australia. On Saturday afternoon a lot of members were down at Footy Park supporting the Crows. I was in heart, but I was out the back in the Adelaide Festival Centre watching the Combined Primary Schools Choir doing a fantastic job. St Leonard's Primary School was there. What did I get when I spoke to people associated with that? They are worried about getting their programs cut. We see in the budget that small programs in schools—and we do not know what they are; and that combined choir is a fantastic 100 year old program—will be cut by \$27 million over four years.

Grant payments to schools will be cut by \$6.8 million over four years. Let us not forget the grab of the interest back on school accounts. I have an issue with things that were said in this place today about the way in which that interest is being identified as a school account, and I will say more about that in coming days. It is not quite as kosher as we were led to believe in this place this afternoon. There is a lot more to it. I say to members to read my lips in a couple of days and they will find out. It is a very serious issue. We know that the education department is asking overworked primary principals, overworked secondary principals with secondary bursars and governing councils to tighten their belts even more because they are looking for \$16.9 million in savings over the next four years.

It is just not on when they have had this river of gold called the GST. We are seeing efficiency dividends of \$36 million in education. We are seeing efficiency dividends across a whole range of departments in this government. We are seeing departments amalgamating—another Greg Smith ACT initiative. Everyone will have to tighten their belt: it will be really interesting. We are seeing government projects go further and further out. I am sorry that the member for Light is not present because the other day I asked him about Roseworthy Primary School. We know that it is wanting \$3.1 million for its redevelopment. I said to the member for Light, 'You are only getting \$100 000 this year.' He said, 'No, it is all being started next year.' Well, correct me if I am wrong, member for Light, but you are only getting \$100 000 and that is just to start on yet another feasibility project to see whether it ends up at \$3.1 million.

It is like poor old Paringa Park. When I initially took a delegation to see minister White years ago, I think it was \$3.1 million—it is now out to \$3.7 million. The government would not allow Paringa Park to build a hall which is badly needed. The costing of these school projects slips out. Premier Rann has said that he is putting on 100 extra year 3 teachers and that there will be smaller class sizes. Let me tell members the feedback I am receiving about smaller class sizes. I refer to the 1990 education review which found that smaller class sizes do not produce the results they want. However, the difficult part for the public to understand—because they are not hearing the full story about smaller class sizes—is that on 1 February they are small. There is no doubt about that—no argument. However, come 1 November, they have crept up and the class sizes are much larger. I am receiving letters from governing councils and primary school principals about this, so it is not just me. I am receiving letters from the people at the coalface. They are finding it very tough. This budget has been a very big disappointment for the education sector in this state.

I do not have time now to speak as widely as I would like on the tourism budget. There have been severe cuts in tourism marketing and infrastructure. As I said in my grievance speech previously, South Australian tourism is a \$4 billion industry which employs 30 000 people. But what are we

seeing? We are seeing cuts. It is absolutely the wrong way to go. It is short-sighted. It is a let down for the small business operators in South Australia. I remember reading the Economic Development Board's report on South Australia in 2003, I think it was—South Australia: the small business state.

Many of those small businesses are in tourism and they are being let down by a government that does not think that tourism should be funded by government. Let me tell members, if you do not market your state, then you will not reap the benefits of people coming to South Australia. We saw those wonderful glossy brochures today, but the only experience we will have in tourism is one of diminished returns and failed businesses. It should be 'Come to South Australia to experience not only tourism but also education'. If members had been listening, in my grievance speech I said that the other big industry for South Australia is education—international education, local education—and exporting our expertise. Tourism and education are the two biggest growth areas for South Australia if we manage them correctly—and, obviously from this budget, this government has no clue about how to manage those two big growth areas.

It is happy to take from mining and agriculture, but when it comes to putting back into education and tourism, it is missing the boat altogether. The only experience that we will have here is one that will leave a very bad taste in our mouth—and I will have a lot more to say about that in my grievance speech. This budget could have been much more. It is not a Liberal budget. We would have done much better than this.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Frome): I am not surprised at the lack of vigour from members on the other side to jump up to speak on the budget. It is a budget for which we waited a hell of a long time. The delay is quite outrageous, particularly if you are trying to run departments. How government departments will come in on budget this year when they were held back for so long waiting for the budget is beyond belief. I am firmly of the opinion that the reason it was delayed was that the government wanted to distance itself from the promises of the election. This is very much a budget about fewer public servants, asset sales and privatisation. Basically, it totally sells out regional South Australia. It is a real sell-out to small business, which shows a massive lack of foresight from this government because, as the editorial in the *Financial Review* identified, small business is the engine room of this state.

We can listen to the Treasurer go on about boats and mines, but small business is really what South Australia is about more so than any other state, and this budget absolutely ignores it. I hope that members on the other side are in the loop about what this budget is all about. It really is about asset sales and privatisation, the two things on which the Premier has signed off, saying that they were absolutely off the Labor Party agenda and that they would not occur. The two big reforms about which we heard in the lead-up to the election were education reform and what they wanted to do with the gaols. Those two things amount to asset sales and privatisation. Greg Smith obviously went through the budget with the Treasurer.

I think he had probably two major messages. One was the Public Service numbers being an absolute disgrace. How a government in a term could budget for 1 135 extra public servants and finish up with 8 885 extra is amazing. It really shows that ministers were not on top of their portfolios and

that they had no connection with their chief executives or with the senior people within their departments. To allow that to happen is just unbelievable. Look what it has done to this state—and this has happened at a time when we have had enormous revenue windfalls. They should have been put to good use. It should have gone into infrastructure. Instead, it has gone into what is an absolutely bloated and disorganised Public Service. There are many good people in the Public Service, but because of any lack of control whatsoever by the government it has blown out.

How a government can budget for 1 100 and finish up with 9 000 beggars belief. It is a sad indictment on the government. Certainly Greg Smith would have shaken his head very emphatically when he saw those figures, and he would have realised very quickly why he was called in. He would have quickly understood where the windfall revenue over the past few years went, why it has not been invested and why that was putting enormous pressure on how we fund the infrastructure projects that this state so desperately needs.

With the Public Service cut I am sure that Greg Smith has made some pretty sound recommendations to the Treasurer as to what needs to happen, but I think the government is very confused, very nervous about totally implementing what he has put forward and what is probably necessary to bring this budget back into balance. I think we are going to hear a lot more about what the government is going to have to do with the Public Service once they get the courage to actually talk about it and get out and let people know exactly what is going to happen, because unless they can cut reasonably quickly we are going to run ourselves into terrible strife. I have no doubt that Greg Smith's second concern was the funding blow-out in capital works and how we were going to solve the predicament over the next four years of how we were going to fund, number one, this massive recurrent spending that the government has put on us through the over-employment of public servants, but also the fact that we had not used any of the money for much needed infrastructure.

I have no doubt that, when you look at where the government budget is at the moment and the predicament that is faced in the next four years, the thought turns to asset sales, the thing that this Premier has said time and time again would never be on his agenda. However, that is exactly what is happening and the people within the Labor Parliamentary Party really do need to understand where the Treasurer and Premier are taking them at the moment, because what we are seeing, and it is only the start, is that what has been held up as an education reform has nothing whatsoever to do with educational outcomes. It has got to do with propping up the budget over the next four years.

The government is hell-bent on looking at the next four years and not looking beyond. If, in fact, you are in deep trouble and you need to inject money into the budget over the next four years, the most liquid asset that the government currently has is land. The idea of closing 17 schools—which is only the start, by the way, and that will go a lot further and will reach into the southern suburbs and other areas once the first round is over. But to sell those 17 schools is nothing other than a grab for cash. To sell the gaol, the land out at Yatala, to sell the land at Morialta, is nothing more than a grab for cash. Over four years, as far as fixing the budget for the four years, it is probably going to be a pretty good strategy, because the Treasurer is going to reap hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars in selling land.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: They do not; they don't get the asset sale.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: No, they don't. The member for West Torrens is being conned as well, because what was actually said is that it was a savings, that it was a savings on running fewer schools that was going to go back. There is no way in the world that if that land is sold for housing the Education Department is going to see a cent of that.

The Hon. J.D. Hill interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The asset sales will bring in a lot of money. What about the gaol land? They are going to sell off the land at Yatala. You are not even putting it back into other assets. What you are actually doing is you are privatising the provision of school buildings, you are privatising the provision of gaol buildings—totally against what your Premier said he would do. Go to your web site. On your web site there is a letter there signed by the Premier saying he would not do it. This adds up to nothing other than asset sales and privatisations. What it is about, if you look at it, what it will do, in the net sense over the first four years it will bring in a lot of money, hundreds of millions of dollars, and I would bet London to a brick that even in relation to some of the schools that will not be closed for five years or whatever I reckon you will see that land forward sold in the first four years, to drag the money into this budget cycle, the four years, in the lead up to the next election.

But what it is going to do is commit governments for the next 30 years in this state to very high recurrent spending. A lot of people will say, 'Well, you won't get anyone to build it,' but you will get someone to build it if you pay high enough. To make sense you would only pay a certain percentage per year. This government, because of the direction they are going in and the fact that they want the cash in and they do not want to pay for the schools themselves, will commit, not themselves, because they will not be paying it in the first four years, but they will commit future governments to very high recurrent money for those super schools, as they call them, and for the gaols. That will put a massive strain on budgets into the future. So really it is selling out South Australia's future and it is very much about the four-year side of it.

The *Financial Review* is well worth having a very good look at. I think they were one that certainly was not conned by the Treasurer's spin and preparation in the press releases that were carried out. I will just quote parts of it, because I think it ought to be put on the record. The *Financial Review*, as I said, I think really did pick up what the budget was about. It states:

SA budget fails to boost growth.

South Australian Treasurer Kevin Foley is working in the wrong state. He's produced a budget for Queensland or Western Australia. Big business is pulling out of South Australia and manufacturing jobs are disappearing. In a state that the resources boom is largely passing by, with growth languishing at the bottom of the national league table, Mr Foley has neglected what could be a lifeline—small business.

Not for nothing is South Australia called the 'SME state' [small-medium enterprise state]—80 per cent of businesses in the state are small and medium sized enterprises. But the SME state has the lowest threshold for payroll tax in the country, \$504 000, and a hefty rate of 5.5 per cent. New measures for business in the budget amount to zero. It is not as if the Treasurer couldn't afford it. Revenue from state taxes will climb 3.4 per cent to just over \$3 billion this year. GST and other revenue from Canberra will rise to more than \$5.5 billion.

Employment growth was 1.7 per cent in SA last year. Residents are leaving for other states—net interstate emigration was 3 599

people. And SA has the highest share of people 65 years and over. Until the state government creates conditions in which business can create jobs and lure people back, the outlook will be ordinary.

It goes on to talk about job losses and the task that the government has ahead of it, but it also talks about the fact that the government does not seem to have any idea on how it can do much about that.

I spoke about regional South Australia being ignored in the budget and, quite frankly, the spin doctors should stay away from the budget papers. I will just quote one thing in reference to primary production. It is interesting because the budget states that primary production figures increased by 1.8 per cent over 12 months. That is until we realise that the government has whacked minerals and petroleum in there to help out the primary production figures. In reality, primary production has dropped by over 15 per cent. The documents stated:

Seafood and horticulture were the only other major primary production categories to experience a decline in production values in 2004-05.

Well, field crops are the highest figure of the lot and they dropped by between 30 and 40 per cent. Wine grapes fell a lot, as well, so I am not too sure who wrote that or why that is in there other than to give the wrong impression. The Regional Statement is full of nothing. The 400 extra police have been included in that statement about regional South Australia because they could not find anything else to actually put in there.

The Capital Investment Statement makes even better reading; it is wonderful reading. There are two issues: absolutely huge slippages and four country schools that were announced in last year's budget have basically disappeared from this year's budget papers. Those communities had their expectations raised that they were getting new schools or major redevelopment. Whether the government does not know what it is doing or whether it was a cruel hoax in a pre-election year on the communities of Kapunda, McDonald Park, which is in Mount Gambier, McLaren Flat and Woodside, I do not know. They do not show in the budget. Whether or not the Treasurer is incompetent and the money is still there somewhere, it just does not show, but I think those communities deserve an explanation.

Let us go back to last year's budget, the pre-election Capital Investment Statement, and it lists about nine projects on two pages. Every one of those nine projects has blown out. In this year's Capital Investment Statement, those nine projects in a row are reannounced this year and the slippage in nearly every case is a very tidy 12 months, which means nothing at all has happened. Talking about the government's priorities with respect to child abuse, one of those is the Australian National Child Offender Registry. It has been in the last three budgets. Initially it was going to be completed in December 2004. Last year, it was cruelly reannounced that it would finish in March 2006, and now it has gone into 2007, and no doubt we will see it again next year. There is a whole range of projects within that Capital Investments Statement which have slid, and slid big time.

SA Water is a really interesting part of the budget to look at. Talk about milking a cash cow. SA Water has one of the greatest infrastructures challenges facing South Australia. Water is an absolutely a vital commodity. We have rusty pipelines because they will not spend the money on maintenance, pipelines that need painting and everything else, and they will not put any money into doing that basic maintenance or replacing plugs or whatever. SA Water has some

major needs, and what we see every year is big announcements of projects that are going to happen and then they slip. In the last two years, there has been massive slipping in the capital works program for SA Water, and that is where the money is needed. What has happened?

In last year's capital works budget for SA Water, the government told the people of South Australia that it was going to spend \$180 million on asset improvement and replacement within SA Water. What happened? It spent \$117 million. If we look on the other side of it, we see that the dividend that it has pulled out of SA Water to prop up Treasury has increased from \$155 million in 2004-05—it budgeted for \$201 million—and the money that was not spent on capital works has been grabbed off SA Water by the Treasurer. The actual grab from SA Water last year was \$217 million, up from \$155 million. So the money that should be going into reinvesting into pipes, sewers and delivery systems within the state for the all-important growth of the state as far as water goes is being grabbed back from SA Water for the second year in a row and has gone to Treasury to prop up the fact that this government has not been able to control the growth of the Public Service. That is where the money has gone.

Again, we have seen so much money that should have gone to infrastructure go straight into paying public servants. As for the public servants, it was just a matter of 'Whoops!' It was not just the current Minister for Health who was conned by his department: most of them were. The numbers just jumped and jumped. During the estimates committees, we would ask the ministers, 'Your agency budgeted to have an extra 60 people this year. How did you get 480?' All we got was a blank look. They had no idea.

An honourable member: Whoops!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: It was just 'Whoops!' Even when they see the budget, they do not get it. It is a fact that they have no control and no interest whatsoever in what is going on with their departments. It is all media, media, media—leave the management to someone else, and it does not work. I will wrap up there by saying that those not in the inner sanctum of cabinet—most of the ministers and the members of the parliamentary Labor Party—should realise what this budget is actually about. It is not about education reform, it is not about gaol reform. What it is about is asset sales to prop up the budget position and privatisation.

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

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Here we are, a mere four months late! Myriad reasons could be given for being four months late, but the one that comes back every time I think about why we might be four months late is incompetence—absolute incompetence! One can argue that, if there was a change of government at the March 2006 election, an incoming government might have wanted to have had a look at the books—a study, take some serious briefings, have a breather—and say that it needed extra time to bring down a budget. But we have a government that was in power for four years in the run-up to the election and in reality it would have been no surprise to the Treasurer and Premier that they won the election as the polls were in their favour and they expected to win. Straight after the election the Treasurer said that he needed another four months. In reality, the government was in caretaker mode for four weeks and it has taken four months to bring down a budget.

The other thing I have noticed, more particularly this afternoon, is that government members have been quite reticent to get on their feet and tell us how wonderful is this budget, to praise this budget. Government members have been very conspicuous by their absence.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: I am glad the minister has come in to hear what I am going to say.

Mrs GERAGHTY: On a point of order, the member opposite said that members of the government were conspicuous by their absence and not jumping to our feet. As a courtesy—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr WILLIAMS: What a wonderful courtesy. I thank the government and I will be delighted to read the contributions of the honourable member's colleagues on that side of the house as they contribute to this debate over the next few days. It will be incredibly illuminating—a lot more illuminating than the Treasurer's comments when he handed down his budget. The member for Napier, the one government member who has contributed to the debate this evening, claimed that it was the best Labor budget ever, or something along those lines. It is a typical Labor budget. If he wants to claim it is the best ever, that is fine by me, but it is a typical Labor budget. It is high taxing. This is the highest taxing government in the history of the state. It is not just an incremental increase in the revenue streams to the Consolidated Account, to the Treasurer's coffers—it is \$2.7 billion more in seven years or over 30 per cent. It is a budget totally out of control.

Here is a Treasurer who, over the last four years, has brought down budgets in this place, aiming to increase the public sector by 660-odd public servants, which has been budgeted for in the previous budget that he has handed down. The figure, to my best estimate, is 8 885. If that is not out of control, I do not know what is. Here is a Treasurer with no understanding or idea what his colleagues in the ministry are doing. He is running a budget and after four years it is totally out of control, with hundreds of millions of dollars—well over half a billion dollars a year—being expended outside what he has budgeted for.

For those of us who remember the State Bank disaster that befell this state not that long ago, the final figure from the State Bank itself (not all the other disasters that occurred at the same time), was about \$3.2 billion. The incompetence of this government is of the same order as the State Bank disaster in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Unfortunately, relative to the other states of this nation, this state will continue to go backwards. That is the dilemma, the disaster and legacy of another Labor government in South Australia.

This government has no vision for the future. It has done nothing to help the engine room of the South Australian economy, and that is the big loser. We will all lose, but the engine room of the South Australian economy, the small and medium business sector, has got nothing out of this government. Payroll tax collections in the current year will be 40 per cent higher than they were when the Rann Labor government came to power in 2002. That is a direct tax on business, employment and jobs for the working men and women of South Australia. That is why the working men and women of South Australia are no longer in South Australia but are in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. That is why the businesses that used to operate in this state are no longer in South Australia: because they cannot afford the taxation regime of this government. Nothing has been done by this

government to even attempt to acknowledge that, let alone address it.

Conveyancing stamp duty in the 2005-06 financial year was 24 per cent, \$116 million, over the budgeted figure from 12 months previous. We ask why young men and women setting out on their lives in this state cannot get into a first home. Sir, you and government members know that in March this year we took a policy to the election to offer some relief from stamp duty to first home buyers. There is nothing from this government to give hope to young South Australians so that they stay here and help build the future of the state.

As to land tax—that other insidious tax on business, on private thrift and on the savings of South Australian mums and dads and South Australian businesses—it has increased a massive 144 per cent during the term of office of the Rann Labor government. If we take out the public contribution to land tax and look at just the private sector, it is a massive 155 per cent. Why would anybody in this state work hard, save and invest? Eighty-five per cent of the economy is made up of small or medium enterprises, and most businesses own the premises on which they pay land tax. It is another insidious tax on the future of South Australia. What we have in South Australia is a treasurer who is both lazy and incompetent. Four months late, we have a budget that does nothing to build confidence in the future of South Australia.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: It's just not fair.

Mr WILLIAMS: I know it is not fair, minister. It is a disaster. It is not fair, and I will have something to say about you, too, in a minute, minister. If time does not beat me, you will not miss out either. We have the laziest treasurer in the history of this state, and I think it could be argued that he is the most incompetent.

The member for Napier says that it is the best budget the Labor government has ever brought down. The Treasurer claims that he has been balancing the budget, and we all know that that is a furphy. We know what happened in his first budget: he shifted payments out of the SAFA funds. More recently, he has been sucking hundreds of millions of dollars out of public corporations, particularly SA Water—a cash cow for this government. In fact, this government would be on its knees without SA Water's bringing hundreds of millions of dollars into the coffers on an annual basis. Earlier in the year, the Auditor-General talked about this and the problem that SA Water has to borrow money to build infrastructure to deliver water around South Australia. It has to borrow that money because it is paying so much to keep the Treasurer's budget out of the red. However, it is only keeping it out of the red by the measurement system that this particular treasurer chooses to use. The Auditor-General also pointed out the reality of what is happening with the Land Management Corporation.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr WILLIAMS: They are getting a bit rowdy over there. They do not like to hear the truth; that is the problem. In 2002, the Treasurer told South Australians that they would be measured using the accrual accounting measure—that is, the net lending-borrowing measure. They said, 'We'll stand by that, and we'll have balanced budgets.' At that time, they did have a balanced budget using that measure, but it was not very long, having inherited a very healthy position, that they went into deficit. In fact, on that measure—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Transport is not in his place.

Mr WILLIAMS: It would be handy if you threw him out, sir. However, I do not want to tell you how to do your job. Having inherited a very healthy budget position, using the accrual accounting method, about 12 months ago the state budget went into deficit. Lo and behold, the Treasurer said, 'We don't want to use that measure any more. We'll use the net operating balance measure. That way, we are still in credit.' This Treasurer is not fooling anybody. I have argued and will argue for a long time—and I know that history will prove me right—that this is the most incompetent and laziest treasurer the state has ever had the shame to have running the books.

This government is going into debt. At the moment, it is budgeted to borrow \$700 million over the next four years. It is more of the same, and we have seen it from Labor governments before. Do not get me wrong, borrowing is a legitimate tool, but I would only advocate and advise borrowing by people who have the bona fides and credentials to actually manage. This government has form. It cannot manage, it has proved it cannot manage, and it has been going backwards for four years. It budgeted for fewer than 1 000 new public servants, ends up with almost 9 000 and claims that they are all teachers, police officers or nurses. We know that perhaps a thousand of those 8 500 to 9 000 might fall in that category; the rest is just mismanagement.

I have skipped over what I wanted to say because, unfortunately, time is getting away. There are a lot of things I would like to say but, while you are here, minister, I am still looking for the \$9 million you told Don Ferguson, the Mayor of Wattle Range Council, was there for the Penola bypass. I hope you can explain that because, having looked at the budget last week, I had to give my constituents in the South-East the very bad news that the government lists in the budget papers things that cost as little as a couple of hundred thousand dollars, but a \$9 million project—the project for which my electorate has been hanging out for a great number of years—is not in the budget.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: It was committed on 24 August. It does not need to be in the budget.

Mr WILLIAMS: The minister tells me it was committed, but it is not in the budget. I have a problem believing that the government would not put a \$9 million good news story in the budget when it puts in a couple of hundred thousand everywhere it can. It does not miss the opportunity to put in a good news story if it can. The minister is trying to tell me—as last Friday he told the Mayor of the Wattle Range Council, Don Ferguson—that the \$9 million is there. Well, Don and I are going to take you on your word, minister. We want to see the job done. We want to see the bypass built, and we will take you on your word—but it is not in the budget.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: I can explain it if you like.

Mr WILLIAMS: I would love you to explain it one day.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: It was committed on 25 August, before the budget.

Mr WILLIAMS: Do it in your own time, not in my time. I will take a few minutes to talk about the portfolio areas that I am responsible for on behalf of the Liberal Party, particularly the mining sector, because this government has made big about how good it is to this sector. The Premier tells the mining industry that he is pro-mining, pro-business, and he is doing everything in the world for mining. In fact, I think he put the uranium there before he discovered it. I think that is what he has told the mining industry: he put it there before he discovered it.

The reality is that the good men and women who work in the mining sector—and they are good people—can see straight through this Premier. They can see straight through him. When I pick up the budget paper and the pages relevant to the mining sector, I note what the Premier said:

I have no doubt whatsoever that mining will be critical to our state's prosperity in the second, third and fourth decades of this century.

That is what he said to the mining sector. Just two pages out of all of those budget papers are about the mining sector, about the money that the government is going to put into the mining sector, a sector where the royalty payments have increased from a budgeted figure 12 months ago, I think, of \$94 million to just on \$120 million. So there is a \$26 million over-budgeted figure that has come in on royalties, yet what is the government doing to the mining sector? It keeps talking about the PACE program (the Plan for Accelerated Exploration in South Australia), the rebadged TEISA program, which we had running for eight years. It keeps saying that is what has been important to the mining sector.

When I look at Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 5.12, under Grants and Subsidies—and that is where the moneys come from for the PACE program—there will be a drop from an estimated result in the previous financial year of \$6.5 million to \$1.5 million in the current financial year. I will have a bit of fun with the minister in the estimates committee on that particular figure, because at the same time royalties paid from the mining sector have gone the opposite way—from \$94 million to \$120 million. I am not too sure how pro-mining and how pro-business the Premier really is.

The mining industry has given me a copy of its state budget wish list, and it has asked for a whole range of things. It welcomes the Minerals and Heavy Engineering Skills Centre initiative, and I do also, but it has been calling for a long time for an initiative to provide infrastructure to the mining industry. There will be a lot of small opportunities in South Australia. We have Olympic Dam, and that is fantastic. We have Prominent Hill, and that is fantastic. We have Iluka over on the west coast, where I think we will have a world-class heavy mineral sands operation. However, there will be a large number of relatively small operations which will only have a lifespan of probably 10, 12 or 15 years.

Those types of operations cannot afford to build thousands of miles of road, rail, pipelines and powerlines to get the mines off the ground. If the government is strategic and puts in some of that infrastructure, a cluster of those operations will grow up around it. We only have to look at our cousins across the border in Western Australia to see what happens, to see the way they have built the gas pipelines, a road network across outback Western Australia, and that is why Western Australia has a mining sector which now accounts for about 25 per cent of that state's economy.

If the Premier believes that the mining sector will be important to the state's future then he should get his Treasurer to recognise that. The Premier should advise him to get his budget under control and get the Treasurer to put some money where the Premier's mouth is, because that is where it is needed. That is where the jobs in South Australia in the future will be. I am pleased to see the member for Newland walk in because I know he agrees with me.

Time expired.

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder): As a new member of this place, I am excited by every day that I am in Parliament House. The opportunity to represent the good people of

Goyder charges me with energy, as I know that I have been provided with the opportunity to contribute to the good governance of South Australia.

In the short time I have been in this place, I have had the opportunity to talk to many wonderful people, people who want our state to move forward, people who do everything within their power to ensure that our state moves forward. These people are energised. They are focused and they are driven. To make their aspirations for South Australia become a reality, however, they rely on the government to create an environment that is conducive to a prosperous future.

Thus for me, in considering these needs, Thursday 21 September was a disappointing day. It was a day of broken promises and missed opportunities. I, and all South Australians, had hoped, after a four month delay, for the Rann government and the Treasurer to deliver a near \$11 billion budget that would provide the stepping stone for economic growth, and the surety that the enormous taxation burden paid by all South Australians would be well spent, spent on ensuring that required infrastructure was to be built and services were to be in place. Sadly, this does not appear to be the case.

South Australians know that this government is the highest taxing government in the history of the state. South Australians know that the GST revenue flowing back into the state has allowed the government to have over \$2 billion per year in additional resources—or as close as it can be—than that available to the previous Liberal government.

South Australians know that the infrastructure needs of the state are immense; and South Australians also know that this required infrastructure has not been provided. As a new representative to this place, I do not possess the historical knowledge of many of my colleagues and those opposite of past budgets that have been presented to South Australians by previous Liberal and Labor governments. However, what I do know is the disappointment that is felt in many parts of South Australia when vital projects and services are not funded. Sadly, this budget has only exacerbated this sense of disappointment in many communities.

I acknowledge the fact that unemployment in South Australia is at a record low of 4.8 per cent. The fact that slightly over 750 000 South Australians are employed is fantastic. However, one cannot help wonder whether this is more the result of the efforts of my federal colleagues, who have provided Australia with good governance since 1996, than it is of the Labor government that markets itself as getting results but does not build anything. When the last monthly unemployment figures came out, the minister and the Premier loudly trumpeted things like the fact that more South Australians are in work than ever before. However, how many of these people only work a few hours each week—not enough to pay the bills, but enough to be counted as being in work. How many of these people need to work more than one job to keep their heads above water—to pay the mortgage, clothe their children or to have the opportunity for a few luxuries that should be accessible to all Australians?

When the minister and the Premier make these proud announcements about the low unemployment level, do they ever think about our youth and the fact that they are faced with an unemployment percentage of 28? Yes, Mr Speaker, 28 per cent—the highest in Australia. When comparing this to a state such as Western Australia, which has a youth unemployment rate of slightly less than 11 per cent, we in this place should be embarrassed that we are not doing enough for our kids. These kids are the future of our state and

nation. They do not want lip service. They want the opportunity to find a job, to study and to build a career. They want to create a life for themselves. The 2006-07 state budget is a missed opportunity for our young people. Within the youth portfolio, the minister has been provided with no new money. Three programs will be run this year compared to the two last year, but only the same dollars are available.

These programs are all very worthwhile, and having previously been involved in a youth advisory committee and having attended the annual general meeting of YACSA recently, I trust these programs continue to be a forum for our future leaders to show what they can do. As a state we must invest in our youth to foster, support and encourage them. For our young people who are on the wrong side of the law, I note that the budget contains \$850 000 for the sustainment of the Magill Youth Training Centre. However, on my reading, the budget does not appear to confirm when this facility will be replaced by a new 90-bed juvenile detention centre at Cavan. Over the next decade, enormous growth will be occurring in the mining sector. To satisfy the need for employees with skills our young people must be engaged now.

Traditionally, one of the greatest opportunities for employment growth in South Australia has come from government supporting small business, as it is this sector that has always recognised the need to employ young people to give them an opportunity to show what they can do. By reducing payroll tax, small business growth would have been stimulated, but this state budget provides no relief. Every year the business sector screams out for assistance by increasing the payroll tax threshold and reducing the rate, but again these calls for support have not been listened to. A recent major announcement by the government was the Skills for South Australia program, budgeted at \$98 million over four years and with a supposed new money injection of \$52.1 million.

This injection of new money is an interesting thought. Let us hope that it is just not media spin but a real commitment by the government to putting additional resources into a vital area. A key initiative of this program is \$24.8 million for the provision of 10 new trade schools. My questions to the minister (and I note his presence in the chamber at the moment) are: where will these trade schools be established? When will they be established? What skill areas will they focus on and how can you manage to create 10 facilities with \$24.8?

The Hon. P. Caica: I will give you a briefing, Mark.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I appreciate that, minister. The project also commits \$14.5 million to support the training of an additional 2 600 apprentices and trainees. Of this number, 2 000 will be apprentices and trainees focused on the needs of high growth areas, existing skills shortages and the needs of the regions; while 600 apprentice and trainee positions will be created as a result of the mineral resources and heavy engineering skills centre being established in the Upper Spencer Gulf region. My first instinct would be to commend the government on these commitments but, when you dig a little deeper, you find that the training costs for these apprentices and trainees have been increased by some \$450 over the period of their training. I am advised that, on average, this is an additional \$450 than that previously required.

Thus, on the one hand, the government creates an assistance for these vital skills development positions, but, on the other hand, it charges more for the privilege of being trained. In this budget TAFE training fees have risen from

\$1.50 per hour to \$2 per hour—a 33 per cent increase. When considering the 2003 increase, TAFE fees have doubled under this Labor government—a sad but true story. Given that apprentices are on very low wages and those from regional areas must also cover the costs associated with attending trade school, this seems a very strange and poor decision. Governments of all persuasions are encouraging our young people to seek a career in the trades areas, as it is recognised now that, for Australia to move forward, we need to encourage both these traditional roles and the opportunities provided by further study at university.

The trade skills these young people will learn will always be required, but governments must ensure that they do not force young people out of these industries by charging high training costs. The cap fee for TAFE courses has increased for the coming and future years, while, in future years, the user choice co-payment will also increase. It will be interesting to see the result of this increased fee structure. My hope is that it does not result in fewer people seeking to enter the trades areas. For young people undertaking an apprenticeship as a carpenter or joiner and who are required to undertake 1 060 hours of training, this increase in user choice fees will now mean that it will cost them \$530 extra—that is, a total of \$2 120 over the four years to be trained.

Similarly, the cost for a metal fabrication apprentice will be \$1 824 and for a cabinet maker \$1 924. Given that wage levels for apprentices are generally regarded as unattractive, this additional cost slug will be hard to accept and to pay. A truly amazing situation. The state government attacks the federal government for its industrial relations legislation, while by stealth it takes cash from the hands of our vulnerable young workers in traditional training areas. Even to my untrained eye, the budget does provide some interesting information. One area that I took particular notice of was the matter of the percentage of graduates who were unemployed before a TAFE course and who found work after undergoing training.

The 2004-05 result was that 55 per cent of participants actually found work. This was a good result, and no doubt the reason behind setting the target for 2005-06 at 60 per cent of participants finding employment after completing a course of study. Frustratingly, however, it appears that the estimated result for 2005-06 will be only 50 per cent. Given our period of employment growth experienced over the last financial year, this result would be very disappointing for the minister and is an issue that he needs to address. What target has its budget set for 2006-07, however, you ask? Is it the 60 per cent mark? No, we are actually back to 55 per cent. The TAFE system must strive harder than this, because the reason that many young people seek to upskill themselves through undertaking a TAFE course is purely to get a job.

The capital investment strategy of the budget also provides considerable detail. I note that in the 2005-06 year \$16 million was allocated for capital works in the portfolio area of employment, training and further education but only \$10 million was actually spent. In the area of further education this year, I note a \$15.1 million capital works allocation, with \$8 million having been set aside to enable the replacement and refurbishment of facilities for veterinary and applied sciences at the Gilles Plains TAFE campus. While I am confident that my colleague the member for Morphet (who, as we all know, is a veterinarian by profession) will support this initiative, it is interesting that the full cost of this project is now \$15 million but, when included in the 2005-06 budget, the projected cost was \$13.1 million. It is a shame

that this project was not undertaken when first included, because a saving to the taxpayer of \$1.9 million could have resulted.

Sadly, the same can be said of many areas in the budget where projects from previous years continue to slip to the following and future years, and I note that other members on this side of the house have reported on many similar instances. \$2 million is allocated for stage one of the redevelopment of the Marsden TAFE campus, while \$1.5 million is allocated for stage two of the Nuriootpa campus.

In my own electorate of Goyder, I note that \$600 000 has been allocated for the redevelopment of the Narrunga TAFE campus at Point Pearce on Yorke Peninsula, and I thank the minister for that commitment. Over the last six years—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: I have to be gracious. I have been to Point Pearce many times, and can confirm that this community needs the support of government now more than ever before. The Narrunga TAFE facility is in a very poor condition and has been in need of an upgrade for many years, so the investment is most welcome. Amazingly, however, information recently provided to me indicates that a certificate two course in tourism which is being run at Narrunga TAFE, which started in March this year and was intended to run until March 2007, has suddenly been stopped. I am not aware why the decision to stop this course was made, but it involves 10 Aboriginal people and it seems a ridiculous situation to me that a TAFE facility is announced for an upgrade but a course being run from that campus is suddenly stopped. There is no logic to this decision and, given the real need on Yorke Peninsula to get job outcomes for the Narrunga people, I hope this decision is reviewed.

When I moved to Maitland in mid-2000 and became aware of the very strong presence of Point Pearce and the surrounding communities of the Narrunga people, it amazed me that the cultural and historical significance of the Aboriginal people's occupation of the region is not better recognised and used as an opportunity to create jobs. Given that there is something like 47 TAFE campuses in regional South Australia, I trust that future budgets of this Labor government will commit to the retention and continued upgrade of all these important facilities.

Whispers within my electorate about the future of the Yorketown campus have recently reached me. As Yorketown is my old home town, I intend to pursue additional information on this rumour. For those who are not aware, the closest TAFE facility to Yorketown is at Kadina, which is a mere 125 kilometres away. People who work in Yorketown service the needs of students as far north as Jamestown. Clearly, the people of the ever-developing Yorke Peninsula region demand the Yorketown TAFE stays open, and with at least the current level of resources. I am advised that regional TAFE is under considerable pressure, with stories of up to \$5 million being cut from the budget. Realistically, such a cut may result in the loss of 100 positions across the regional TAFE network. The government has a community service obligation to encourage life-long learning in all South Australians. Why should those who live in regional South Australia be discriminated against?

While not within my shadow portfolio responsibility, I would like to comment briefly on the 2006-07 budget for specific purpose payments from state to local government. I certainly support the continued provision of funds to local government for adult community education programs. In regard to the very important Broadband SA program, I

congratulate my old employer, the District Council of Yorke Peninsula, on its continued success in being granted funds by the state for the second stage of the Broadbanding the Yorke Peninsula project. That project, the National Youth Week and the Youth Advisory Committee are three programs that will receive funding this year. However, I was alarmed to note that no provision has been made for the local government youth traineeship program. My recollection is that this program in previous years has provided training and career opportunities to enter local government for between 50 and 100 people each year. Many of these young people have gone on to continuing employment in local government and have served their communities very well. So, I hope that my reading of the budget is wrong and continued support for this program exists.

Within the gambling portfolio, the predictions this year are for a total tax take of \$417.7 million. I find it amazing to consider that gambling adds to state government coffers to the tune of just over \$1 million per day. \$307.5 million comes from gaming machines, \$76.3 million from the Lotteries Commission, \$10.2 million from the TAB, and \$21.7 million from the SkyCity casino; while \$2 million comes from small lotteries, on-course totalisators and soccer pools. In real terms, gambling taxes will increase by 1.3 per cent this year but projections are for decreases of 5.8 per cent and 3.3 per cent in the following two years. In the last year, expenditure on gaming machine gambling grew by 1 per cent, which reflected the impact higher petrol prices and interest rates had on discretionary spending within houses. Gambling in its many forms would appear, for many people, to be part of their way of life. Managed appropriately, it can represent an enjoyable way to spend time. It is for those people—who are very much in the minority, thankfully—who are not able to manage their desire to gamble that society must ensure that support exists.

Many community-run organisations are providing a wonderful level of support for these people, but they need more of them. Clearly, this financial help must come from the government. More must be done to control the tragic circumstances of problem gambling. My doorknocking in communities prior to the election enforced the belief that South Australians expect much more from their governments; and, basically, they do not care whether it is local, state or federal government. People are not concerned about who provides the much needed infrastructure and services, they just want to make sure it is provided.

A state budget of more than \$11 billion is expected to provide people with access to these things. Sadly, I do not believe that this budget will meet those expectations. Sadly, it is a budget of broken promises and missed opportunities.

Mr KENYON (Newland): I rise tonight to support the budget. It is an excellent budget. I would like to make a couple of points about it particularly, if only the member for Norwood would leave me alone just for one moment. First, I would like to talk about education. I congratulate the Minister for Education on her efforts. Members may know that I am a big fan of a reform agenda, and this is an excellent example of reform. I note that the member for Morphett talked about privatisation, and it amuses me because I would like to know how it is possible to privatise something that we do not even own.

We do not have these schools; they have not been built. How can you privatise them if you do not have them? It is an opposition grasping at straws in the wind, trying to find

something on which to hang their hat, some criticism, and it has to manufacture it. It is just a fundamental misunderstanding of what privatisation means. The work the Minister for Education is doing is to be commended. It is courageous in the best sense of the word. Many ministers would run away as soon as you say the word 'courageous'. The Minister for Education is courageous in the best sense of the word, and there should be more of it.

If she intends to roll out this program across the state, she will have my full support. I am very impressed with the idea of these great new schools being built, of more opportunity for students to study more subjects, and it is to be commended. It is a great education program we are running. We have \$76 million of new money coming through in this budget—a per capita spending on education of \$10 496, which is up 38.1 per cent since we came into office four years ago. There is a lot to commend what we are doing in education and there is a lot on which to commend the minister.

A couple of members of the Liberal Party have talked about infrastructure. They all rabbit on. It is a common theme from members opposite to talk about infrastructure and how the state is in dire need of it, but they never tell us what it should be. They never say where it should be. There is no plan from them. There is no infrastructure policy about what we need, where it should be and how much it should cost. All we ever hear is, 'There should be more infrastructure.' It is the standard whining and carping from the other side of the chamber about how there should be more of this and more of that.

The member for MacKillop mentions all these mining projects and that the government should be doing this and that, but some of them are not even concrete yet. He is expecting us to have some sort of plan. For instance, the people from Iluka on the West Coast do not know where they will put their main line. They have so many deposits. They keep discovering them all the time but they are not sure exactly where they will mine. Somehow, out of the mystery of all this, we should be able to determine where this infrastructure should go.

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mr KENYON: The member for MacKillop asks where they will ship it from, but that is not even certain.

Mr Rau: Build it and they will come.

Mr KENYON: Build it and they will come. The member for Enfield's movie-going experience is coming to the fore. Until these plans are concrete you cannot work out where these things will go. To come in here and say that the government should be doing more and that it should be doing this and that is absolute rubbish. It is all that we can expect from an opposition that is so intent on making some inane criticism of a budget about which it cannot get any public traction. It is four days and it has not run one good line on which it has received any traction about how bad this budget is. No-one believes them.

Everyone accepts that it is a good budget. There is no whingeing; there are no complaints. No-one is flooding my office saying, 'Oh, my God, what is wrong with this budget?' They are quiet. They are happy with it.

Mr Rau: They got they're reply out of the *Financial Review*.

Mr KENYON: Apparently they got their reply out of the *Financial Review*. Members opposite had all weekend. They had Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday and they could not come up with one line of attack. We saw in question time

today a very poor line of question. Out of an \$11 billion budget, all they could come up with was one item of \$6 million. That is all there was.

Members interjecting:

Mr KENYON: It would be easy to sell 100 extra teachers to my schools. It will be easy to sell this budget because it is selling itself. We are getting needle after needle from the opposition saying, 'No-one is getting up and defending the budget', but what matters is what happens out there. It does not matter what we say in this chamber. It has been well accepted out there. Members opposite have not delivered one good criticism of this budget, because it is a good budget and you cannot criticise it.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I am pleased to make a brief contribution to this debate because that is all it takes to have a fairly quick analysis of what has been put before us. We are talking about spending over \$11 000 million. The most interesting aspects of this budget and why this government has got a substantial amount of money at its disposal is explained on page 2.36 of the Budget Statement, Budget Paper 3. That is where it clearly indicates the amount of interest that the government is going to pay, because if one looks at the particular document that the Treasurer has put before us it tells us that in 1994-95 we were paying about \$620 million in interest, and this year the government will be paying less than about \$100 million. So they have another \$500 million, thanks to the good stewardship of the last Liberal government, at their disposal to carry out the general services of the state.

The explanation in the budget clearly indicates that, but the Treasurer could not bring himself in his many, shall we say, examples of bipartisanship and humility which he displays, to make reference to the inherited well organised budget, and the difficult decisions that had been made. I recall that when we came to government and when we were going to ministers wanting some projects in our electorate there was no money, and the process had to be to rebuild the economy and take some fairly difficult decisions. But those decisions have now put us in surplus, and may that continue for a long time into the future, because just as the federal budget needs to operate in surplus so does the state budget.

The other aspect of this budget is that, without the revenue from the GST, I wonder where the budget would be. So the two initiatives of Liberal governments have put this budget in surplus. They have given the people of South Australia the chance to have some positive developments take place. Unfortunately, they have not been evenly spread across the state. In my electorate there are a number of projects mentioned in the budget documents. We have the Regional Arts Centre which is going to be put at Port Augusta. That is going to be a development at the old Institute Building. We have a considerable number of roads mentioned. There is Blinman to Wilpena.

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: But a lot of this money will be federal government money—Roads to Recovery. We have the Stone Hut Bridge, long overdue; Oodnadatta to Hamilton—that is for the tourists; and Lyndhurst to Marree. The Lyndhurst to Marree road was on the program to be sealed but it was stopped. When this government came to power it stopped it. The Renal Unit at the Port Augusta Hospital is a very important project and it is going to provide a service to the people of Port Augusta over a wide area. It is very important. The Renal Unit is a very good facility, operated

by hardworking, caring people who give a great service to those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Also, I am pleased to see that the Ceduna Area School has been upgraded, and I note—

Mr Griffiths interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, it is long overdue, can I say to my colleague. I see you got some money at Kadina. That is excellent. I sincerely hope that the redevelopment of the Kapunda High School continues, because there is an urgent need. I was interested to read in the *Advertiser* this morning that one of my constituents, who happens to be the State Council Secretary of the ICPA, had this to say:

The South Australian Isolated Children's Parents' Association was disappointed with the State Budget.

SAICPA seeks equity of access to education for rural and remote students and will continue to lobby the government to this end.

We believe that rural and remote South Australians have been forgotten in the 2006 State Budget. This is highlighted by educational issues that have been overlooked, such as the fitting of seats belts and airconditioners in school buses; retention of at least one DECS bus at each rural school; and the promised review of the school travel policy, including increases to the School Travel and State Education allowances, and an additional component to the State Education Allowance for most remote students.

The most effective and important way the government could contribute to the continued strength and resilience of rural and remote communities is to adequately fund rural and remote education. This is clearly not a priority in this Budget.

That is unfortunate, because these people who live in these remote localities are entitled to a reasonable amount of the revenue in South Australia, and it is absolutely essential that their children get a decent education. So I think it is unfortunate that there has not been an increase in the state contribution towards assisting them with boarding fees and transport so the children can come home on a regular basis. It is very important. Some of them have to travel hundreds and hundreds of kilometres. I was pleased to see that the office that was conveniently established in Port Augusta—

Mr Goldsworthy: The Labor campaign office?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, it was an interesting initiative. But obviously it failed and it is now going to be closed.

Mr Goldsworthy: Those poor people of Port Augusta will suffer because of that, Graham.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: They did suffer, but they have been saved. Some of the senior public servants up there will be pleased that they are not being duplicated. It says that the office in the southern suburbs will remain open. Page 2.16 states:

The saving measures include closure of the Offices of the North and North West and Regional Ministerial Offices. This coincides with the completion of a number of projects with remaining functions absorbed within the existing resources of portfolios which will continue to work in conjunction with key stakeholders.

Whoever wrote that, I give them full marks. It was an admission, they dressed it up nicely and said that the projects have been completed. I wonder what projects they are! I wonder what was the main project! The main project was the campaign in Stuart! There is a bit of history about this. First, Don Farrell spent his money and that failed, so he got sick of it and then the government had to come to the party and it failed. What will be the next step?

We have lots of promises. The road to Blinman was going to be sealed. We are still working out what happened to the land alongside the yacht club. We all know what happened. We had the famous television interviews a couple of days before the election where the Premier was scuttling across

Gladstone Square, which was an interesting exercise. One of the most pleasant things that happened to me during the election campaign was when I went down the street on the Wednesday morning and got *The Transcontinental*. On the front page, to my absolute surprise—I was spellbound—there was a photo of one of the councillors wearing a red T-shirt.

Mr Goldsworthy: What did it have on it, mate?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: 'Rann the land stealer'. It was on the front page of the local paper. I came back and said to my staff, 'I think I believe in divine providence.' Someone has come to look after us. I thought, 'Sometimes you're lucky.' I understand that it caused a bit of a ripple in another office and I understand the Premier is still not pleased about it and I am surprised because I thought he was a fellow with a sense of humour.

Mr Goldsworthy: Not when the joke's on him!

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I understand the Ombudsman is having a look at this, but at the end of the day I always believe that all good things come to those who wait. I had to wait about three years to get even. They had a cabinet meeting up there and—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Turn to the right page. I am talking about saving money because they closed the office. You will have to have more cabinet meetings in the country. You had a cabinet meeting at Port Augusta in the old ETSA club. The people of Port Augusta should be grateful, as the previous state government gave it to the council, along with the swimming pool. It fixed it up. They had a meeting and invited all the faithful—all and sundry. They had to put up with me there—and that was all right—along with the mayor, one of the councillors and the CEO. When one of the councillors had the audacity to ask a question about this, he was sat down from a great height. The next time I saw him he had on the red T-shirt. He won the round and I am still here. I am sure they are pleased about it.

I am here to make a speech on the budget. I want to see real improvements in what is available to people in rural areas. There is an urgent need to ensure adequate funding to continue to upgrade the road system. Unfortunately, we have had a very difficult winter and there will be difficulties in many parts of rural South Australia. I sincerely hope government agencies and private financial institutions clearly take into account the great stress and hardship that will be experienced by a lot of people, not just the farmers but the people who run the transport businesses and the mechanics who work in the various machinery agencies.

I was told the other day in one place by a chap running a small engineering business that he might as well shut the doors for the next eight to nine months and go to Roxby Downs because there will be no work. That is unfortunate because these small engineering businesses play a very important role in rural South Australia. At seeding and harvest time there is normally a line up of augers that suddenly tip over and need to be repaired and these people have great skills in doing those things. If that family goes out for six or nine months it can affect the school and the little shops and it has a serious flow-on effect. There is an urgent need to ensure that common sense applies and I hope these institutions are aware that these people will be under a great deal of stress.

The other important area is that in relation to the funds that will be applied to the reorganisation of the health system in rural South Australia. I have no trouble with getting rid of

regional health boards—and I have told the minister that—but I appeal to the minister to be aware—

Mr Pengilly interjecting:

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: That puts me right off—I am rather shy in front of an audience. There is an urgent need to ensure that rural hospitals can maintain their identity, that the local community can retain ownership and feel a part of their operation. Hospitals are very important to the people in country areas because in many cases these communities built the hospitals and have continued to support them. There is a need to ensure that as many local services as possible are maintained.

I appeal to the Minister for Education to make sure that the bureaucrats in her department do not continue with this nonsensical process of racing around the country and wanting to take away school buses and isolate communities. I agree entirely that, in some cases where there is a high school or a primary school in a town, there may need to be some amalgamation. That is common sense because, at the end of the day, the most important thing is to ensure that we get the best education outcomes possible for these young people.

I was a bit disappointed to learn that the pastoral studies process at Port Augusta TAFE has been done away with. It was a good program, and the people who ran it did a good job and trained the students well. I think it is unfortunate. I am looking forward to a briefing from the minister on the reasons, and it will be a subject we can talk about at a later stage. I think that there is going to be an ongoing need to ensure that adequate training is available to those communities.

In conclusion, this budget of over \$11 000 million is a document that has not evenly distributed the resources available to this government. I think that is a great pity because I want to see more opportunities for rural South Australia. I am disappointed that no money has been allocated for the upgrading of one airstrip in the north of South Australia. There is a need to seal the William Creek airstrip and put money into the one at Oodnadatta as well as other places. We talk about the tourist industry, and it is terribly important to continue to support it because many of the small communities need tourism to survive. I think that the Outback Areas Trust has been put under pressure, and it has had to cut back some of the services available to it. I support the bill before the house and look forward to budget estimates, when many of these issues will be further explored.

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): The budget document, of course, is eagerly awaited every year. Having listened to the member for Napier's explanation of the budget, I understand it a lot better. This evening I would like to pick out a few highlights for the electorate of Florey, which it has been my privilege to represent for almost nine years. As is always the case, health and education are the big items in the budget. I am pleased to see that Florey and, indeed, all the north-eastern suburbs will benefit from the return of the operation of the Modbury Hospital to the public sector at some stage in the very near future. We all understand that a great deal of work needs to be done around the contract being brought back into the public sector. In the budget, I see that \$17.47 million has been put aside to make sure that the transition is as smooth as possible.

Also in the budget is an additional amount of \$14.4 million over four years for accident and emergency specialists. The Rann government's initiative will see the employment of additional clinicians to increase the capacity

of the emergency departments of metropolitan public hospitals to manage the increasing demand on the health sector. The additional funding will be allocated across all public hospitals, and I pleased to say that Modbury Hospital is part of that allocation. Of course, this will mean an improvement in services. We all know that the demands on the health sector, particularly the accident and emergency area, are never diminishing and always increasing. It would be remiss of us not to look at ways to improve the delivery of services in those areas. I look forward very much to exploring the budget documents to look at the moneys put aside for primary health care and preventative strategies.

I would like to see the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Generational Health Review, and I acknowledge the member for Little Para for all her wonderful work in that area. Through her, we were able to participate in that process, with the consultation in the north-eastern suburbs, when it looked as though we would not be able to do so. The Generational Health Review is a new way of looking at health delivery, and much work is to be done if we are to ensure that all of us have access to the health care we have come to expect. As we all live much longer now, we are looking to have the ability to enjoy our health right to the very end, and that is of course understandable.

It is also about helping us to understand and take responsibility for our own health and about looking at ways to manage our health and fitness through diet and exercise. I do not think that that work has really started. In my time as a member of the Social Development Committee, one of the topics the committee looked at in relation to obesity was the big issue of the importance of labelling. I would very much like to see the removal of all lollies, chocolates and biscuits from checkouts, which are placed there to tempt not children but adults. I would also very much like to see every bar of chocolate wrapped in plain paper (but I think that is a long way off), not to mention the rows of chocolate and lolly bars at petrol stations. I think that we have to be very careful to make sure that the labelling lets us see how many spoonfuls of sugar each of those items contains.

At the recent CrocFest, I saw some of the information available to the rural indigenous students at that event. That showed the amount of sugar in things like iced coffee, to name just one item, which is readily available and which we seem to be drinking so much more these days. I encourage everyone involved in the area of food production in South Australia to look at ways to present healthier food choices in a much easier and more accessible way for the community to use.

Moving on from health, we look at the education allocations in the budget. I am pleased to see that Modbury High School will be able to fund a feasibility study for future capital works. I am sure that this refers to its arts centre, which the school has worked so very hard to make sure is built there very soon. Modbury High is an excellent school. It has a wonderful program in music and, while not a special interest school in that area, it has produced some fantastic results, and it is my pleasure to travel with the students to Mount Gambier each year for the Generations in Jazz festival. I also recently watched their efforts at the Pedal Prix in the Rural City of Murray Bridge. The school fielded two teams this year for the boys and one for the girls, and I was very pleased to see the enormous effort made and the amount of fun had by the very hard workers. It ensured that they all enjoyed a very good weekend. I am not sure of the actual results yet; just finishing the event is, in itself, the goal.

The other large school within my electorate is The Heights School, which is a CPC-13 school. It is to receive \$1.49 million for the child/parent centre, which is part of the 20 capital works projects, and will provide a new preschool facility and convert existing space to classrooms. The Heights School is the school my children attended. I have lived in Modbury Heights for 30 years and my then husband was a teacher there in the second year of the school's existence. My children attended the school when they turned five, so I have had a very long association with The Heights School. Sadly, not a lot has been done to that school over the years, so it is good to see the first big injection of funding going into it. Many schools in the state require new infrastructure and that, of course, is why we have seen this bold new initiative around the schools in the north-western suburbs. I am very happy to see that money coming in to The Heights School.

In the budget I note that the graffiti removal program, Repay SA, has been expanded to the north-eastern suburbs, with an injection of \$968 000 over four years. This program compels offenders to perform community work, including the removal of graffiti, boosting the numbers of low-risk and first-time offenders working to benefit their local communities. This will extend the successful pilot program that was run at the Christies Beach Magistrates Court to Adelaide's north-eastern suburbs. Graffiti, especially along the O-Bahn—while it can be mildly entertaining and often attractive—is nevertheless a symptom of underlying problems. So, I am pleased to see that the graffiti measures are being put forward. I believe the program at Christies Beach has been very successful and I look forward to the same success in the north-eastern suburbs as well.

I would also like to talk about another couple of initiatives in the budget. One relates to buses and the replacement of buses. I do not have the figures with me because, as I said, I was not expecting to be speaking quite so soon this evening. The O-Bahn has been running for around 20 years in the north-eastern suburbs. It is still the fastest way to get to the city. I know the bus changes in August last year caused a great deal of concern in the north-eastern suburbs, but in an effort to lift the patronage of the public transport system it was pretty clear that we had to adopt some new initiatives.

I am now very happy to see that the consultation around the new timetables to be introduced next week has been a lot more extensive. I have been assured that there will be a lot more on-the-bus information handed out. I know the information will be available on the web, and we will be having a meeting of our public transport group in my office this Friday to look at the timetables and what impacts there may be. Although there will be very little around our area, it is the extension of our lines on the other side of the city that we will be looking at. At this point, I also make a special mention of the J buses and how well they have been received. There are still a few people talking about the lack of space for air travel luggage, and I know that this is something we will be working through as we continue. Many workers at the airport have found the J buses very worthwhile.

Another thing I would like to look at is the extensive infrastructure program around the corrections facilities in South Australia. I think everybody knows how long overdue the women's prison update is, not to mention the update of the facilities at Yatala. I have had the honour, I suppose it is, in a strange way, to work with some people at Yatala and in the women's prison at Northfield over the years. I have worked closely with some people who have been incarcerated there. I know that there is much that can be done to ensure

that rehabilitation plays a much stronger part in the whole process of incarceration after a crime.

I am very interested in restorative justice. I noticed this evening on the news there was a story of a family who had been involved in restorative justice. They recommended that the person involved in the accident which killed their loved one not be incarcerated. I think restorative justice is something that we could have a very good look at to help keep down the numbers in prisons, so that it is only the people who really need to go to prison for longer periods of time who are there. There is a great deal of different sorts of work that can be done with people who find themselves on the wrong end of the justice system.

When I was first elected, I could not believe that the women's prison was still being used and, of course, nine years later it is still very much in action. We do not know exactly when the new prison will be commissioned in Murray Bridge. Even though we know it is coming, it cannot come soon enough. I know there are many reasons for the increase in crime, but particularly with women, it is more crime relating to matters of fraud, gambling and drugs. I am very much looking forward to seeing the new prisons put in place so that rehabilitation work can be done in much better surroundings.

All in all, that is just a brief snapshot of what is in the budget for the people of Florey. I know that, as the estimates sessions occur, we will be able to tease out a bit more of the information. The government is working hard ensure that South Australia has a prosperous future. It is working hard to make sure that people who are unfortunate enough to lose their jobs have access to the training and upskilling that will help to see them re-employed.

I commend all the ministerial and departmental staffers who have been involved in creating and preparing the budget. I know how hard it is to make sure that everything is done as well as it possibly can be. We are grateful for the several specific projects that have come to Florey, not to mention the side gains from the larger projects that will benefit the whole of South Australia. I commend the budget.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I am certainly pleased to make a contribution to what really is a very important piece of legislation, the Appropriation Bill, where we see \$11.2 billion of public moneys directed to the operation of the different areas of the responsibility of the state government. I will make a couple of points initially about this budget, and other members on this side of the house have also made this point. This is a typical Labor budget. It is a high taxing, high spending budget. We have seen over decades of different Labor governments, both federal and state governments around the country, high taxing and high spending budgets. I first became interested in politics in the mid-1970s when I began my employment and when, unfortunately, the country had to suffer through the Whitlam years. We saw enormous spending on a whole range of unproductive areas throughout that administration.

Fortunately, we have seen the nation recover over the past decade through the prudent, efficient and effective management of the federal Howard Liberal government. This is a budget all about missed opportunities and the government making the wrong decisions and choosing the wrong priorities. As I said, this is the highest taxing government in the history of South Australia. As I have done on previous occasions when I have spoken on other budgets, I will support my argument and my comments with some statistics

and factual information. I will share with the house a couple of statistics that show how this government is the highest taxing government in the state's history. I refer to taxation collections under Labor starting from the 2001-02 year to the 2009-10 forward estimates.

We start off at a level of \$2 194 million (\$2.194 billion), and that extrapolates over that 10 years to \$3.410 billion. Anyone can work out that that is an increase of approximately \$1.2 billion just in state taxation revenue. The source of that information is the budget papers. We can have a look at some other interesting statistics, too, concerning the three previous budgets where the actual revenue amount has been underestimated. We call that a windfall. In 2002-03, we saw a \$528 million windfall; 2003-04, \$794 million; 2004-05, \$595 million; and 2005-06, \$367 million. That is a total of \$2.284 billion, which is an averaging of \$571 million per annum—a significant amount of money in anyone's account. That is over half a billion dollars in additional funding that the government had estimated throughout those four years.

Do we see any tax relief? We certainly do not. We see tax and revenue collections continue to rise, but with no financial relief for the long-suffering families and businesses of South Australia. There has been no stamp duty relief for struggling first home buyers, no additional concessions for financial assistance for older South Australians and no payroll tax relief, with the obvious detrimental effects on the business sector within the state economy. They are a few accurate statistics from the very budget papers. We are also looking at the issue of spending. As I said, this government is a high taxing, high spending administration. I will refer to some more facts and figures.

One of the critical areas of the highest spending over the years of this government (the last five years) is the blow-out in Public Service numbers. The official estimates of Public Service job numbers are provided by the Commissioner for Public Employment in the annual public sector work force information reports. I will refer to some information from this official reporting area. If we look at the historic information again, the total FTE Public Service numbers in June 2001 were 68 884; June 2002, 69 770, an increase of around 900; June 2003, 71 373, approximately 1 500—creeping up all the time—June 2004, 72 141, roughly another 1 000; and June 2005, 76 720. So, there was an enormous increase in that 12 months from 2004 to 2005 of around 4 600 public servants, with an increase in that five year period of 7 836 FTE public servants. That is where the majority of the spending has been made. As the leader and other speakers have said previously, this is where the missed opportunities are.

I want to get on to the significant areas of health and education, and there are some pretty glaring examples of how poorly the government has managed these two important areas of portfolio responsibility. We have recently seen the state gain the dubious honour of having the worst elective surgery waiting list of any state within the country, and we know that over quite a number of months, if not stretching out to a year or two, it has had the worst emergency waiting list on record in the state.

The Treasurer heralded the great news of \$640 million additional funding in this year's budget for health services to be rolled in over a four year period. I want to quote a media release that the deputy leader (the shadow minister for health) issued just yesterday, because it is quite accurate and puts things into perspective. It states:

The community is being told by [the Premier] and [the Deputy Premier] that the entire \$640 million will be devoted to extra hospital admissions and making an impact on record queues for elective surgery. It won't be. . . It is clear that over the coming four years there will be health sector enterprise bargaining that will inevitably result in pay increases for doctors, nurses and others working in the sector.

This is a really important point that the shadow minister for health makes. She states:

The government admitted this during budget estimates in 2004. In fact, the government estimated health sector wage increases for existing staff would amount to \$155 million in 2006-07 and \$167 million in 2007-08.

This is the government's own admission and its own budget estimates only a year or two ago. She continues with this important information and states:

In estimates in 2004, the health department's financial services director said that, of the \$322 million in extra wages over the two years, only \$152.5 million had been set aside, leaving a shortfall of \$169.5 million. Further shortfalls in 2008-09 and 2010-11 will leave a black hole in the budget of \$339 million or twice that amount, meaning the government's 2006-07 pledge of \$640 million effectively becomes a 2010-11 delivery of just \$301 million—over the entire four years.

That boils down to just \$75 million a year in additional funding into our health services—a pretty insignificant amount when you boil it down, and quite different from what the Treasurer was trying to dupe the electorate into believing, that is, there is an additional \$640 million over a four year period being poured into the health services. So, again, there have been broken promises and missed opportunities.

The other major portfolio area is that of education. A lot has been spoken about education in the last week or so, particularly with the great fanfare and heralding of the super schools that the government will build. It is interesting to note where these super schools will be built. If you look at the information that is provided, they will all be built in the safest of safe Labor seats. I wonder what the sitting members think about this. We have heard all the spin from the Treasurer, the Premier and the Minister for Education and Children's Services that this will be the best outcome—it will not, actually, because people have seen right through it, but they have attempted to do the best spin job in the history of this government in trying to convince the public that this will be beneficial for the educational needs of our children.

On radio the other day we heard that the chairman of the school council at Mansfield Park knew nothing of it. The government is talking about extensive consultation with all the communities affected, but the very person you would think would know first hand about this information, being the chairman of the school council at Mansfield Park, knew nothing about it. The first he knew of it was when he listened to the radio and a television news bulletin. That is a pretty glaring example, I guess, of the extent of the consultation that the government has undertaken in terms of closing 17 schools initially, I think it is, and building these super-duper sized schools.

As I said, those communities are in the safest of safe Labor seats, but I have had some experience working in some of those areas. In a previous career I managed a bank at Woodville North, and that parks district of Mansfield Park, Woodville Park and Ferryden Park, all those areas, formed part of my client base. You could describe that as a lower socioeconomic area, but there are some tremendously good, caring and compassionate people in those areas who are concerned about the welfare of their families and their children. We believe that this government (which is meant to

look after its constituencies) is doing a tremendous disservice to its constituencies in forcing onto them this drastic policy initiative. I noted the newly-elected member for Newland's comment that he is a strong supporter of the rationalisation of schools and the public/private partnership initiative in those safe Labor seats.

I wonder what the member for Newland would think if the Minister for Education and the Treasurer came to him and said, 'Well, we want to close Banksia Park High School. We want to merge that with, say, Modbury High School and make a super-duper high school in the north-eastern suburbs'? I wonder what the member for Newland would say then? I know what he would say. He would be vehemently opposed to it. The government is doing this only because it knows that it can get away with it in its safest Labor seats.

Mr Griffiths interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, the member for Goyder raises a good point—consultation. My experience with this government relating to issues in my electorate is that consultation means that it makes the decision with the bureaucrats. The bureaucrats convince the government that this is a fantastic thing to do. They convince the minister that it is the best thing. The decision is made. The consultation process is going out to the affected stakeholders and communicating that decision. Consultation is asking people what they want, getting some feedback, taking all that information back to the department, going through it and trying to come to some sort of compromise or agreed position.

It is not as it has been in the past five years in my experience. The decision is made and the government tells the key stakeholder groups of the decision, and that is it. It holds the public meetings, it listens to all the concerns but it falls on deaf ears. It just tries to wear those people down slowly but surely into some sort of state where they are not prepared to fight any more, and it rolls out its policy any way. I can guarantee that this is what will happen with this school issue. The leader highlighted some very key and important points. I think that this current Labor government should always be reminded that Liberal policy and Liberal governments have driven the economic recovery and development of this state and this nation.

Federal and state Liberal policy has been responsible for the economic recovery in South Australia. We have \$2.7 billion more in the budget this year (2006-07) than the previous Liberal government in 2001-02 ever had—\$2.7 million additional funding. Our budget was a little more than \$8 billion. It is now \$11.2 billion, which is a significant amount of money with which the government can find additional ways to improve the delivery of services to the community of South Australia. That is through the GST and the asset sales that the state Liberal government undertook, as well as the further development of our mineral resources. Time expired.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond): I wish to speak tonight on the lack of regional awareness by the Labor government.

Ms Bedford: I was in Murray Bridge last week.

Mr PEDERICK: Absolutely. The occasional member opposite recognises where Murray Bridge is. However, I digress. The first issue on which I would like to speak is the funding that is being pulled out of the branched broomrape eradication program over the next four years, which involves a fair chunk of the electorate of Hammond around Murray Bridge and up towards Mannum. This program was promised as part of an unholy alliance with the former member for

Hammond. Part of the compact that relates to this program states:

... to commit to a program of fumigation to eradicate branched broomrape where ever it is discovered in South Australia and thereby provide certainty to the release of the land from quarantine and to fairly compensate the landholders who make their living from the land upon which the infestations occur.

What we have seen in the budget laid down last week is that \$500 000 of state funding from that program will be taken out in this financial year, \$750 000 will be taken from that program in the next financial year, \$1 million the year after that and another \$1 million in the year after that. That hardly sounds like an effective eradication program for branched broomrape, which is a weed that could threaten our whole export markets. This just shows the contempt the Labor government has for regional South Australia.

The cost economies in fumigation have changed since the days of the unholy alliance with the former member. Methyl bromide is not a practical method of fumigation nor a cost effective method. Advances with application of pine oil, which is sprayed on to the soil, and Basamid, which goes through an air seeder are having a great effect on the control of this weed. We are finding with years like this, where times are tough out in the rural areas, that people are not taking up spraying programs on their own accord because they do not have the money to spend. They barely have enough money to keep going, and all we can see is the government taking money from the program. This has already had a direct effect on one of the project officers with the program who has just quit his job because he was downgraded to a .5 placement, and has progressed on to other employment. I just wonder how this will affect the other states that are, in conjunction with this project, putting in funds, and the commonwealth government also put in funds to this program. What will they think? 'The South Australian government is taking money out, we will just drop our funding as well, and damn the rest.' It is just not good enough and it is just typical of how a Labor government treats regional South Australia when they do not need a vote.

Another item that has happened recently was the closing down of the Mallee Financial Information Service. This has left a lot of programs out in the cold, but most of them have been picked up in other areas. But one program I would like to comment on is the Youth Extreme Leadership Program in the Mallee, which is a great program for encouraging youth to take on leadership, to make active decisions about their future and plan for their business. This program is only surviving by different agencies taking up the funding. At one stage it was thought that statewide this program may be picked up. We will have to see where that goes into the future.

I will talk about regional roads briefly as well. And what can you say? There is nothing going to rural South Australia. There is \$3.4 million in extra road maintenance, when there is a \$200 million backlog, and where is that going to go? It is not going to do anything. I have a couple of major highways, Murray Bridge through to Loxton; there is the Pinnaroo to Loxton Road; the Wellington to Strathalbyn Road—all need upgrades, apart from many other roads throughout my electorate. These are more areas where money could be spent regionally, but it is spent on backing up blown-out road funding projects in Adelaide and a tram line to nowhere.

Another hot topic which we were told we would be consulted on relates to the upcoming gaols that will be built out at Mobilong, in Murray Bridge, and by the time they are

delivered it only would have taken the Labor government eight years to deliver these goals—a \$315 million men's prison and a \$96 million women's prison, and, yes, there certainly needed to be an upgrade. We welcome that at that level, but what we do not welcome is the complete lack of consultation with the local council when it came to making the announcement and everyone running around wondering what was going on. This is after only the week previously the member for Cheltenham, when speaking to the proposed sale of the Cheltenham racecourse, and he mentioned it in the house here, saying how Labor prides themselves on how they consult the community. Well, they certainly did not do it on this matter, and we would like to see more communication down the track. I will commend the minister, minister Zollo, for coming down to Murray Bridge and meeting with the local council and Mayor Arbon on Friday last week to discuss the program.

I will certainly be making it my business, along with the local council, to make sure that local services are kept up to the new prisons when they happen—the health services, mental health services and transport services, so families of inmates can get to the prison and then get home again in a timely fashion, and we also will need housing facilities. About 400 staff will be working there. The Public Service Association is already worried about getting people out from Adelaide to work down in the Murraylands. Murray Bridge is a happening place at the moment. All around the area there is building development. So that will also be something to be taken into effect. Education, yes, we have heard about the 17 schools closing and the six super schools, but I am afraid in Hammond, Lameroo, we will get a feasibility study on what will happen there. So that is all we are going to see in education out in the Mallee.

I will talk about the Murray-Mallee Strategic Taskforce, which my wife happened to work with a few years ago. That is having a complete restructure I believe. Two present staff will be redeployed. It will be absorbed into PIRSA and we will lose a direct liaison between the people and PIRSA, let alone the direct conduit between agencies and facilitation groups. It is just another thing where Labor has turned its back on the country community.

I also want to talk about something I have mentioned in the house before, namely, a fire hydrant maintenance program. There is nothing happening there. I have also got constituents who live out near the park at Ngarkat, near Lameroo and Parakie. They had the dreadful fires in late January, and they need decent fire breaks to be maintained for the protection of their property and fencing, let alone their lives, and if someone takes any affirmative action they get into trouble for knocking down a bit of scrub. This needs tidying up. DEH said controlled burns and more clearing would take place to make it safer. There are still problems with fencing being paid for from those recent fires.

As the South Australian Farmers Federation stated, there is a complete lack of commitment to regional South Australia and to the vast contribution the country areas make to the state's economy. This year the terrible drought is shaping up to be worse than in 2002, and it is only four years since the last terrible drought and five years since a decent income year for farmers on the land. We see nothing in the budget at this stage. We hear about the task force and the talkfest. I commend the government on setting up initiatives for people to ring up rural counsellors.

On 15 October 2002, the former minister for agriculture, minister Holloway, when the Labor Party actually recognised that there was a problem, stated:

I wish to update the council on action this government has taken to assist those affected by drought. . . Last weekend the Premier announced a \$5 million drought package for South Australian farmers in rural communities that had been hit by record low rainfalls, which threatens their livelihoods and the state's primary industries.

As members are no doubt aware, there are many farms in South Australia, particularly in the Murray Mallee and the north-east pastoral area, as well as in other areas of the state, that have been severely hit by drought. During this year, rainfall in most agricultural areas of the state has been significantly below average, with many farms suffering a one-in-twenty-year low and others having the lowest rainfall on record.

At times it is obvious that people in the Labor Party recognise that there is a time of need for regional South Australia and it is time we all took notice that people are hurting out there. Young lads are leaving the farms if they are lucky enough to find employment elsewhere, possibly in the mining industry. How many people from these families will return? That is the harsh reality in the rural areas: a lot of these people will never come home as such.

Another issue I wish to discuss in regard to the budget is health. Country Health was set up as part of the new three health boards in South Australia from the end of June, with the two city health boards. In effect, regional boards are now being told that the interim country health board was always going to be wound up. All seven regional boards understood 'interim' to mean until a new board and members were established and that the interim board's role was to guide that process. It was with that understanding that they accepted dissolution, and it seems that there are no broad ideas of where Country Health is going.

A document entitled 'Frequently asked questions', apparently prepared by the department for the new Country Health SA board, with a covering letter signed by Barbara Hartwig, described as Chair, Country Health SA, was presented to country hospital boards in August this year. Question 12 asked, 'What would be the legal status of hospitals and health services?' The answer was:

As with metropolitan regions, country hospitals and health services will not have a separate legal status. They will become services to which the board of Country Health SA will be responsible as the single legal identity.

Given that this statement was made in August, country health stakeholders were entitled to believe that the board would survive longer than one year. Yet, now the question of its permanency is being asked of departmental personnel, those stakeholders are being told that the new board was always going to be permanently dissolved and they were made to feel that they should have known that. If it was known all along, why did not one of the many people representing regional boards ever understand that?

It should be noted here that most, if not all, of these volunteer representatives are full-time professionals in various fields, some closely related to health or service provision. They are not just doing their bit for the community. Seemingly, at least some of the new board members were allowed to believe what those in the minister's department knew to be incorrect. If the plan is suddenly changed, why are ministerial departmental staff insisting that it was always the plan? It would seem at the very least that there was never any intention to carry out the promise made in the above answer in August 2006.

On page 1 in the discussion paper, under 'Background', paragraph 4 states that the general view reached by delegates was that, if Country Health is to work as a fully integrated service system, changes would be necessary to local governance arrangements. The true feeling was that they were given little choice and that, while most of these regional boards were delivering good, well-managed services, they could not continue to do so if the minister's department withdrew support by whatever means. In a Powerpoint presentation made by John Hill to the Riverland Regional Hospital board on 22 August 2006, one panel stated, 'Why is the minister proposing this change?' The answer was:

I would like to see all residents of country SA knowing exactly what health services are available to them. Up-front and honest is what I want us to be.

That is an interesting quote. It is true to say that a few Country Health services were in some difficulty. For them, handing everything, including their liabilities, over to the department was sweet relief. For others, however, whose boards had steered them ably and carefully, sharing certain services and facilities with neighbouring hospitals to minimise costs and maximise services, taking the management and control of their own local facility completely out of their hands in such an underhanded way is an insult to their ability and professionalism.

Most of these individuals are experienced, capable and dedicated to providing the best possible service and facility to their local communities. Many of these individuals are well qualified in related fields and leaders of organisations with significant budgets and responsibilities who are used to dealing with government departments and other agencies to provide a balance between the needs and wishes of their communities and the financial limitations of their funding bodies. It is also worth noting that these people have provided their dedication and expertise to perform this vital and ongoing role as volunteers. Where will the government save money on replacing them with a small army of public servants based in the city?

How would city or suburban dwellers feel if the tables were reversed: a bureaucracy located in perhaps Mount Gambier or Port August ingesting information and inquiries, requiring action from suburban hospital councils and waiting however long it takes for a country based authority to make a decision about that inquiry? The government has committed millions of dollars to road projects in the north of the state that are no doubt needed. However, given the numbers at the last election, it would appear that they might be trying to buy votes in what has become a marginal electorate. Perhaps they would do better to earn and hold the respect and trust of rural voters by being sincere about their interests and up-front and honest (to quote the minister's words) about their intentions with rural needs.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Although it is 25 past nine, and I was going to speak tomorrow, I am happy to speak tonight. In relation to the budget, I assumed that, with a government that was re-elected only a few months ago, this would have been a budget that would have far-reaching ramifications. I would have assumed that, with the election victory they had, and with all the money the government has at its disposal (and we know that it is approximately \$2.7 billion extra), we would have seen a lot more far-reaching, in-depth expenditures than we have. I have to say that I am extremely disappointed. I have been in this place for 16 years, and it really annoys me that three-quarters of the

members on the government side do not understand what sort of budget has been delivered for them, the government. There is not a member in this house who, either now or when they retire, will look back at this time when we were in government and blew our chances. I will wear it because I am here, too, but I am not the government.

I honestly believe—and, understand, this is on the record, Madam Deputy Speaker, and there for you to read in 30 years' time—that you and all the members in this place sat back and let this state to go down the drain. Why would I make an inflammatory comment like that? I believe that right now this state is having an absolutely boom time in relation to the revenue to the state and the people of South Australia. Our people are paying more than their share of tax, but what do we see? Particularly as a country member of parliament, I see a government that has spent absolutely nothing, or only token amounts, outside the metropolitan area. As the member for the Barossa Valley, I thought—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: What about the four courts—Victor Harbor, Port Pirie, Berri and Port Lincoln? No new court building in Adelaide, but four in regional South Australia.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Don't rewrite history, Ivan. Stick with the facts.

Mr VENNING: The Attorney-General raises the four courts. There is not one in the Barossa Valley.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Of course there is not one in the Barossa Valley.

Mr VENNING: I do care for all country people. The member for Mount Gambier can sit there and make comments. He is the one who has kept his government in power. All I can say is that I am here with a conscience. I had some business acumen behind me before I came here. Pick up your members' register of interests and have a look.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Go back to business then. Don't come in here and lecture us.

Mr VENNING: I would have been a lot better off if I had. I wonder where the business acumen is of the minister.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Get a life.

Mr VENNING: The member for Mount Gambier tells me to get a life.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Don't come in here talking rubbish.

Mr VENNING: He now says that I am talking rubbish.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: You have just insulted the whole house. You have just told everybody in the house that they are incompetent. You come in here and lecture us.

Mr VENNING: The member can draw what conclusion he likes from what I said. I did not say that. The member for Mount Gambier represents a country electorate. How can he can sit in this house and see the whole of country South Australia being totally left out of the project process, apart from the four courts, and I give that credibility. I have been pushing for years for a new Barossa hospital. What mention of that is there in the budget? No mention whatsoever, none.

The people in the Barossa pay more than their share of taxation. They really do, and the minister understands that. What have they had back in five years? This government spends \$5.6 million on the car park at the Flinders Medical Centre, but it will not spend \$3 million on the Barossa Valley Way. I despair when I see the run down nature of the state's assets—our roads—not only in the city but particularly in the country. We know that we have a backlog of roughly \$200 million—

Mrs Geraghty: Four years of government, but what about eight years of your neglect?

Mr VENNING: I have a lot of time for the member for Torrens. I remind her, when we were in government, of the \$19.6 million on the Morgan-Burra road in my electorate. When have we seen anything like that since? Gomersal Road, \$7.7 million, when have we seen anything like that since? I cannot get \$7 000 out of your government.

The government has to create its priorities. I certainly listened with great interest to the super school concept. On the surface, I can go along with that system because there are many schools where the maintenance is high. Can I just say to the government, if I had been running it, I would have done one or two at a time, not seven. I would have done one or two at a time just to see what happened. I bet you are going to get screwed. I was present at the national public works conference in Victoria about three years ago, the Victorian Labor government was pushing the concept of PPPs very strongly. The then lady minister—for whom I had a lot of time—said quite clearly, ‘Be very careful when you are involved with these PPPs because, unless you are extremely smart, you will get screwed and you will get screwed over a long period of time.’ All I can say to the government is that it has to be very careful. It has to play hard-ball and get the best deal for the people of South Australia. In the end it has to make sure that the deal it writes is the best for the future, because it could lock the state in for many, many years.

I am very concerned that after being four months late with this budget—we have waited for this budget for four months—there has been no money spent in my electorate at all in that time.

Mrs Geraghty: That’s a big change.

Mr VENNING: The member for Torrens says it is a big change. In five years there has been little spent in my electorate.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

Mr VENNING: Irrespective of where you live, if you pay taxes you are entitled to a fair go. I do not believe the people in my electorate have had a fair go. I have had members of parliament visit my electorate, I have had the Minister for Health visit my hospitals, and they all admit that the Angaston Hospital is possibly the worst one in South Australia. But what happens? Nothing—and the members opposite laugh; they just laugh.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. We are not laughing at the member opposite.

Mr VENNING: You were laughing.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Really, you should apologise. It is most offensive.

Mr VENNING: You were laughing.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Not at you.

Mr VENNING: Well, that is how I took it, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! This debate is not appropriate. The member for Schubert will confine himself to the question at hand.

Mr VENNING: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, but not for your protection. I say to members: understand that what you say and do is all on the record, and I intend to be around for a few years yet. I believe that we are all going to rue the day—both members of the government and the opposition—that we had this opportunity, and this budget was the one where we let it get away.

We had a great opportunity—with the money that has been coming in—to be able to organise some long-term projects. It is all very well for members opposite to laugh at me, Madam Deputy Speaker, but very few of them have got to their feet and made any comment at all tonight. The only reason I am speaking now is because the government would not put a speaker forward.

I cannot believe that, with all the moneys that have been coming in to the state government—\$2.7 billion—this is the best we can do. I want the government and all members—backbenchers included—to consider the position that South Australia is in right now. Just have a very good think about this: the state is booming because we have a resources boom. But as the minister sitting here will know straight away, the income from primary industries this year—the state’s major industry—will probably be down by 50 per cent, and that is conservative. That is the range now. The income from our wine industries is negative, it is down in fact, most will be in a loss situation.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Negative?

Mr VENNING: Well, very low. Given the debt in our wine industry—the minister would know—the real return to growers is extremely poor. We know that the manufacturing industries in our state have been through some pretty difficult times, with several major businesses pulling out of our state. The government needs to ask: what is going to carry this state forward?

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Mining.

Mr VENNING: Mining; you are right. The minister said it. Thank you, minister. He said mining, and that is correct because we are going through an unparalleled resources boom in Australia, particularly the coal industry, which does not affect us here in South Australia but it certainly affects Australia. In South Australia it is all about uranium, and it is no thanks to the Labor Party. I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition today on his magnificent speech. I ask all members to have a good look at that speech. It is one of the best speeches I have heard in this place.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: That is what you say about every leader. You have been saying that for 16 years. You said that to Olsen, you said that to Brown, you said that to Kerin.

Mr VENNING: I am not being partisan. I am asking members to consider the words of my leader today. I did not hear any political rhetoric in that speech, none.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Unlike yours.

Mr VENNING: It is only because it is late at night, minister. But I am looking forward to your contribution, minister, if you are game enough to make it. You can make it tonight, if you like; I will wait. Would you like to get on your feet?

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: Stick to the script.

Mr VENNING: I do not have a script.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: That’s obvious.

Mr VENNING: The point I am making—and I pause to get some decorum in the house—is that the government of this state can be compared to a business.

You have to have income to make the business tick. In this instance, we have the resources boom, which is going on very strongly, but look at everything else. Look at primary industry, the wine industry and manufacturing. You only have to have the resources industry pull back or fall over, and where are we then? I ask members to consider that. I have been here 16 years and sometimes I think that this job is more important than us as individuals. I urge every member in this

place, whether they be ministers, shadow ministers, or backbenchers to consider that we are all in this place to do a job, and the collective job which we do will reflect upon us for the rest of our lives. Even in retirement, we will be known to have been in this place in the early 2000s when the state did certain things. I do not intend to be here without raising my strong voice dissenting from many of the directions of this budget at this time.

I cannot believe that many of the projects with which the government has been involved have blown out. I am very concerned—and the minister is here—about agriculture, because I have had a very close affinity with agriculture throughout all my years and to see the agricultural budget cut yet again—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: It hasn't been cut.

Mr VENNING: That is how I see it.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: You can't even read the budget.

Mr VENNING: There is no doubt about that; I am very concerned about that.

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I urge the minister to get to his feet and make that comment to the house. South Australia has always been a very strong primary industry sector and this year the sector faces a severe drought.

Mr WILLIAMS: Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The minister has the same opportunity as any other member to speak for 20 minutes on the budget, but he does not have the guts to do it.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the minister to order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Schubert has the call.

Mr VENNING: This is Labor's fifth budget—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want to have to call the house to order again. The member for Schubert.

Mr VENNING: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is Labor's fifth budget and it has deserted real South Australians yet again. Again it has made cuts to vital services to agriculture at a time when the services are most needed. The minister can go on all he likes but today we heard the announcement that they have even cut back the Rural Counselling Service from 12 members to eight. True or false, minister?

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: The federal government, you nitwit.

Mr VENNING: True or false?

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: The federal government.

Mr VENNING: Answer the question: true or false?

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: The federal government cut the funding—you are not going to blame me for that.

Mr VENNING: Mr Speaker, I will continue on; I have made my point. I believe that the decision was with the state government. It was in the budget papers and that was what was said on ABC Radio today—

The Hon. R.J. McEwen: They got it wrong.

Mr VENNING: Irrespective, that is what I heard. The government funding for agriculture, wine and the State Food Plan has again been reduced, totalling a 15 per cent cut over the past two years and a 20 per cent cut in real terms—the minister is quiet. These cuts come on top of slashed budgets in the first two years of the Rann government. The former Liberal government embarked on a state food plan and set down very ambitious targets. We invested in the plan and South Australian food producers, and saw huge growths in our food industry. By 2002, we exceeded the ambitious target

revenue of \$1 billion. The plan is now in disarray and the food industry is continuing to decline.

I am very concerned where we go from here. One only has to drive along any road leaving Adelaide and they can see a huge problem. There is a \$200 million backlog in road maintenance, but the trouble is that government sees spending on roads as not sexy. I despair that a total of \$3.6 million in this budget for rural roads, with a \$200 million backlog, will not go anywhere. I despair because I do not know what we will do. I have just returned from South America where toll roads are the norm. Will toll roads be the norm here in the next decade? I believe that they will be because I cannot see any other way that the government will catch up on the \$200 million road maintenance backlog. I wonder about that because you cannot run away from that. The minister who lives in Mount Gambier would drive on more country roads than most, and he would understand that we have to spend a lot of money—

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mr VENNING: He has a chauffeur-driven car, but he still has to travel on the roads. I believe that many of our fatalities on the roads are as a result of our poor road conditions. Finally, I say how disappointed I am as the member for Schubert and the Barossa Valley that this budget has been yet another city-centric budget. My electorate and, indeed, all the rural electorates in South Australia have largely been ignored—not totally, but largely—and it is high time that the government played fair, because if we cannot get some money out of the government for my electorate, what are we to do—go to the federal government?

Mrs Geraghty: I got nothing out of your government for eight years.

Mr VENNING: I do not think it is fair. I think that we treated everyone reasonably fairly.

Ms SIMMONS (Morialta): I am very happy to be speaking tonight on the Appropriation Bill. I would have been quite happy to speak to it tomorrow, but given comments from the other side, I will speak tonight. I am very pleased to be speaking on the Appropriation Bill. This is a good budget—fiscally responsible but showing compassion for issues particularly in the health and welfare sector, which have been the subject of lobbying for quite some time now. First, I will talk about issues affecting my own electorate.

I am particularly delighted to see that new detention facilities will be provided for through a public-private partnership arrangement at Cavan. At a cost of \$79 million, this will include a new 90-bed juvenile detention centre as a single modern facility, as well as \$27 million for a new 80-bed pre-release centre. This will mean that the Magill Youth Detention Centre in the seat of Morialta will be closed and the site vacated and made available for future developments. I know that there has been considerable lobbying for a number of years (as I have been part of the process) to close the Magill site, with promises made by the previous Liberal government to do so. However, this is the first time that this issue has been costed in the budget papers, and I congratulate the Treasurer on this measure.

Having spent the morning going through the centre, I was deeply disturbed to look at the fabric and conditions of the building and to realise that these young people have to live in these conditions while in detention. Wearing my psych hat, I do not believe it is beneficial to the rehabilitation of these youngsters to live in buildings that were not purpose-built for their detention and care. They are in a dilapidated condition,

they have been poorly kept, and they do not suit the purposes of the programs being run there for the children. The kitchen is a long way from the eating areas and therefore, by the time the food arrives, it is often cold. Because of the danger of breakouts from the area, some of the outside areas cannot be used, such as the market garden and swimming pool areas. It is not a good environment for these children, and I am very pleased to see that the new facility will be purpose-built and these youngsters will get the rehabilitation they need to be able to go back into the community.

I am also pleased that the Morialta Conservation Park will benefit from the services of another park ranger. There have been some serious issues in the park in the last couple of years, and a new ranger is something we have been looking for in the area, so I am very pleased to see that that has now happened.

We will also see another police shop front in the Campbelltown area, and that is also something the community has been asking for. As part of the doorknocking process during the election campaign, it is one of the main issues that was brought up as part of our law and order program. The new fire station on Darley Road at Paradise is also scheduled for completion, and that will help, particularly with access and support for the wonderful volunteers of the CFS in servicing areas at the top of Athelstone, Montacute and Norton Summit.

As the local member, I am very pleased that Morialta is an area synonymous with migrant settlement. About 27 per cent of my electorate still identify themselves as Italian-Australians. There are also about 500 Greek-Australian households. I am also more than pleased to say that many new migrants are being encouraged to settle in this area, particularly those from Sudan, Sierra Leone and Turkistan. This budget will see \$500 000 over two years for a pilot program to encourage and welcome new migrants in South Australia, and I think this is a great addition to this budget.

On a more general note, I would like to comment on initiatives that I have been involved in before coming to this place over many years working in the health and welfare sectors. Health system funding in this state will exceed \$3 billion in the 2006-07 year. This budget emphasises the importance that must be placed on primary health care. Primary health care is vital if we are to provide a satisfactory service to the public and keep people, especially older people, out of the hospital system. We do not want to see them there except in urgent or critical circumstances. I believe that GP Plus health services are the way of the future. They will provide longer operating hours and more access to services. Coupled with the provision of 50 primary health care nurses, over four years, \$20.7 million has been allocated for additional home support services and community-based accommodation for people with disabilities. Primary health care in this state is now on the front foot, and looking forward.

I am delighted also to see \$6 million over four years given to expand the family home visiting program. This was an excellent program introduced under the former minister for health, and it is a very important project to support families with young children, giving them the advice and care they need in those early months with their new offspring. This early intervention initiative will help with both child-related and mother-related health issues in their early stages, often preventing more serious problems in later months or years.

It is well known that poor oral health and dental care affect people's overall health and wellbeing. Recent research has shown a close correlation between cardiovascular and

lung problems and poor oral health. We also note that poor dental health affects people's ability to enjoy a quality of life we expect in South Australia. It affects work performance, self-esteem and even family life. People are not able to go out and enjoy themselves with their family in restaurants or share a meal together if they have poor dental health with ulceration of the mouth, pain, etc.

I am therefore pleased to see that \$12.9 million over the next four years has been put into the South Australian dental service to reduce adult dental waiting times. This will equate, I am pleased to inform the house, to 7 000 dental patients each year, and it is a very important initiative. Given my background, I cannot help but comment on the additional \$4.2 million over the next four years to be provided to increase early intervention assistance to children with autism spectrum disorders and to provide support to their families.

The challenging behaviours of people with this disorder can be greatly helped by increased therapeutic services, especially when caught at a very early age. This funding will be welcomed by the families of the autism community. Mental health has been an important issue of concern in the community and is therefore an important focus of this budget. The recruitment of a further 30 mental health workers at a cost of \$9.7 million is very important. The fact that they will work with GPs across the state makes it even more significant. This puts these mental health workers where they are needed—in the local community where help will be more readily accessible.

I am also particularly pleased about the \$10.2 million to be allocated over the next four years for the Healthy Minds program, which is directed at additional health services within the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. It is very important that children's mental health, which has been neglected in the past, is now looked at and taken seriously. This amount of money will greatly benefit those services.

Some members will be aware of my long association with the Arabunna community in Marree. Indeed, I know intimately every rut, stone and hazard on the Oodnadatta track between Lyndhurst and Marree. The resurfacing and sealing of this road will not only will make a significant difference to the community in Marree but also assist the tourism industry of this state as Marree is the gateway to Lake Eyre and the beautiful surrounding countryside in the vicinity. It is an area visited by many interstate and international visitors who bring in many dollars to an area that has very little other local industry.

Lastly, I would like to welcome the announcement of the establishment of a new Commissioner for Victims' Rights. The role of the Commissioner will be to support victims in court proceedings and to monitor the effect of the law on victims and victims' families. This initiative will be an important addition to the Rann Labor government's law and order reforms. I am pleased to support this budget as a way forward for South Australia.

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN secured the adjournment of the debate.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN (AMENDING AGREEMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (ELECTRICITY AND GAS) BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

WORKERS REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION (TERRITORIAL APPLICATION OF ACT) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

DEVELOPMENT (DEVELOPMENT PLANS) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

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

That the house do now adjourn.

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Let me make this quite clear, Mr Speaker: my whip tells me that there was agreement that the house would get up at 9.30 p.m. The government has chosen—

Mrs GERAGHTY: On a point of order, sir, the member for MacKillop is misleading the house.

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mrs GERAGHTY: You have been misled, and now you are misleading the house.

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

Mr WILLIAMS: I do not know how the Government Whip could say that I was misleading the house when I am just relaying what I am told by my whip.

Members interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: You can have that debate later on. I am just explaining, sir, that my whip has told me that there was an agreement that the house would get up at 9.30 p.m. and that agreement was broken clearly by the government which put on another speaker, after 9.30 p.m., and my whip has told me that, as far as he is concerned, the government has broken the agreement. Not only that, but the opposition is concerned that the government has chosen not to bring on any of its members, forcing some of our members to speak when they were not exactly ready.

Notwithstanding that, sir, I want to take the opportunity to talk about the situation in regional and rural South Australia as the season progresses. I had the unfortunate experience last Friday to drive through my electorate, from the minister's home town of Mount Gambier right up through the middle of my electorate to Coonalpyn on the Dukes Highway. Members may recall that last Friday was a pretty awful day, with high winds blowing. Before I got to Naracoorte dust and soil were blowing off a paddock on the edge of the road. A poor former who had put a crop in some months earlier in the season, which has been so shocking for months now, now had only about a 30 per cent cover on that paddock. The paddock was shifting. All the way from Naracoorte to Coonalpyn soil and dust was blowing from

paddocks because of the lack of rainfall over the whole of this autumn/winter and spring period.

The state, I believe, will experience one of the worst seasons farm wise that it has experienced for a long time. Over recent months I have had the opportunity to be in most parts of the state east and south of Port Augusta, and I have had reports from a couple of people on Eyre Peninsula. In my estimation, the worst hit portion of the state with the seasonal conditions is the area between Naracoorte and Pinnaroo. It is particularly bad in the Keith/Bordertown area and west of there. It is an absolutely disastrous situation for the farming community right across the state.

Even though I say that particular area in the northern part of my electorate going into the southern part of the electorate of my colleague the member for Hammond, it really is a disaster. Unfortunately, for the farming community in other parts of the state, as the season progresses I think the outlook for those areas is rapidly approaching the outlook that we have in the mid and upper South-East, and that is one of absolute disaster.

The flow of income in the farming community will be severely reduced if not taken back to absolute zero in a lot of areas and, of course, that will end up in a net return for their effort for the 12 month period. That will have an incredible impact not just on the whole of the state and its economy but it will have incredible implications for those farming families, those farming communities, not just the farmers themselves and their families, but also the communities in the local towns that service those farms because the income will not be generated this season for them to go about their normal business and make normal purchases.

One of my colleagues was saying today that one of the local tractor dealers in his town believed that he would sell three new tractors, but the farmers involved all pulled out of those potential sales. The rural towns will suffer greatly. It is very difficult for governments to do anything. In spite of the Premier that we have, I do not believe that he can make it rain; and I am sure that if he could he would have, as all of us would have. But, it is difficult, and there are not a lot of things that governments can do. You cannot go out, obviously, and bail out what would have been, but the reality is—

Ms Fox interjecting:

Mr WILLIAMS: In respect of the inane comments from the member at the back, Kyoto would not do a damned thing for those poor struggling farmers in rural communities. If you know anything about the South Australian economy, you would understand that. The reality is that there is very little that the government can do, but there are a number of things that we can do to ease the burden on a number of farms. I am calling on the government to take on board the comments that I will make about some things that can be done.

In my electorate in the Upper South-East of South Australia, we have a drainage scheme which has now been running for a number of years, and the local farming community is being levied to pay towards the maintenance of that scheme. I make two points: one is that the scheme is well behind schedule, and the farming community has been levied twice after it had been told that the first levy would cover the cost of the scheme. I call on the government to give those farmers in that area a 12 month holiday. I am not asking the government to write off the levy, but give them a 12 month holiday.

I was talking to one of my constituents the other day who, later this year, will be asked to find \$13 000 for his contribution towards that levy. It would greatly assist him and his

family, who will have very little income this year, if that was pushed back at least 12 months, and I call on the government to do that. I am not asking for it to be waived; I am asking for a holiday for this particular year. Also, in terms of the accelerated freeholding program, which has been ongoing in the state for a number of years, I would call on the government to put a halt to that for this season. Those farmers who have already paid that—fair enough—there is not much you can do about them, but there are a number of farmers out there who are involved in paying to freehold land under the accelerated free- holding program over the next little period.

Again, I call on the government to say, 'Look, we recognise that there will be little in the way of income in the farming community; we will put that program on hold, and we will not call on any of those farmers to pay out the \$2 000 for each title'. Some of my constituents are paying substantially more than that under that program. I am calling on the government to look at this and see whether it can put the payment of any of those things on hold for a period of at least 12 months for these people wherever they are in the state, because they will feel the pinch.

Another issue, which is probably more important, is stamp duty for farmers who have to renegotiate loans from their financial institution for carry-on finance. With the cost of putting in a crop today, the average farmer probably spends anywhere up to half a million dollars (and I know of some who have spent more than that) but gets very little return. They will be lucky to get back their seed. They have put all that money—hundreds of thousands of dollars—into their

crops and, in many cases, they will get absolutely zip in return; if they are lucky, they will get their seed back. If they are lucky, it will cost them a substantial amount of money to buy more diesel to put in the header just to get their seed back; in some areas, they will be lucky to do even that.

I call on the government and the Treasurer to look at giving stamp duty exemption to those farmers who can genuinely show (and I am sure they can do so with a letter from their financial institution) that the renegotiation of their finance is purely to cover the fact that they do not have an income in this drought year. Those are three small areas which, at the end of the day, will not eat into the bottom line of the Consolidated Account. They are all revenue neutral to the government.

I call on the government to look seriously at these proposals as a way of showing that it is genuinely concerned about those individual farmers and, in the case of carry-on finance and stamp duty, I would say it is not only the farming community, as I am sure there is potential for some small business operators in some of our rural towns also to avail themselves of that sort of stamp duty exemption if they can prove that the drought has caused them to renegotiate their finance. I take the opportunity to put this request to the government on the record. I hope that it is taken seriously and that the government takes it on board and comes up with a positive response. Perhaps there are also some other areas the government can look at.

Motion carried.

At 10.07 p.m. the house adjourned until Wednesday 27 September at 2 p.m.